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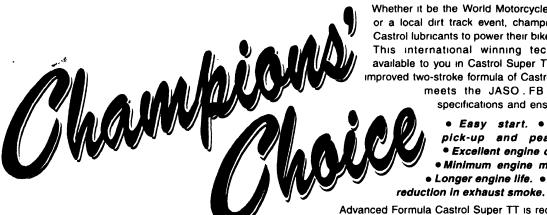


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in the past one year, the Indian cricket team, led by SACHIN TENDULKAR, has had one of its worst runs in recent memory

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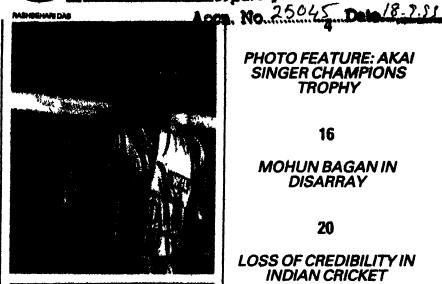






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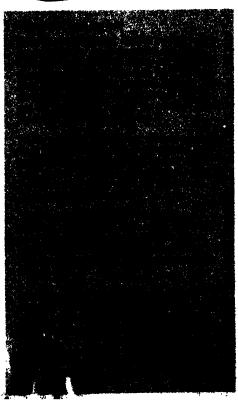
COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF SACHIN TENDULKAR BY

Editor Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi

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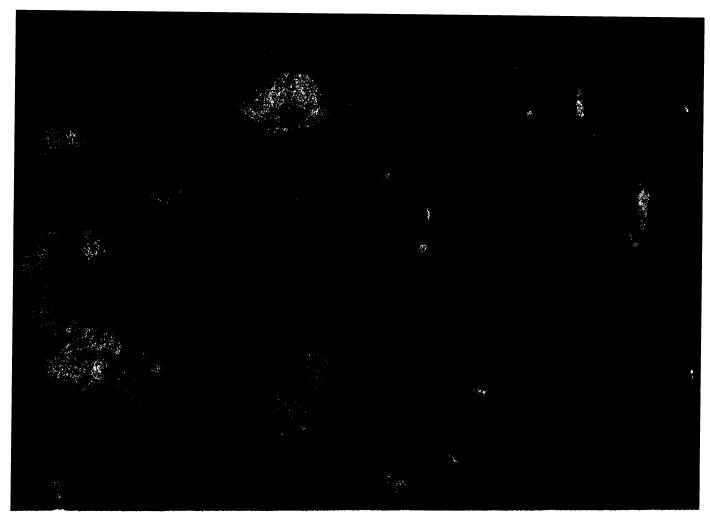




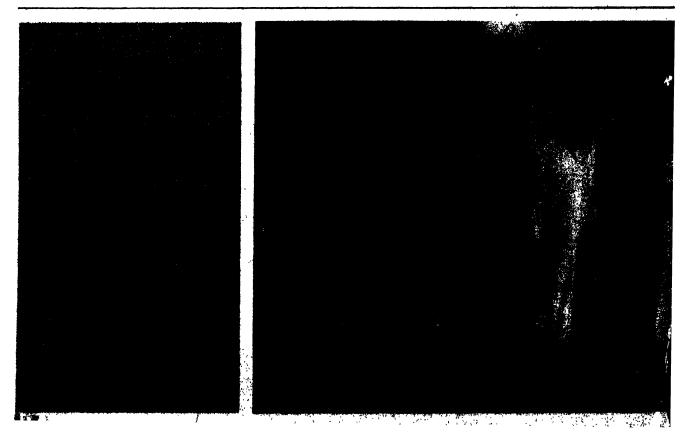
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KAMAL JULKA captures the excitement and despair at the Akai-Singer Champions Trophy at Sharjah





P H O T O F E A T U R E



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HARD TIMES

In the past one year, the Indian cricket team led by Sachin Tendulkar, has had one of its worst runs

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COVERSTORY

NDIAN cricket 1997: The makings of a tragedy. One could write a book on it as the sun finally set on what has been a nightmarish year for the game in a country where it has become a national obsession.

It is a pity that a year which began as a season of hope had to end in shame. This five-letter word just sums up the prevailing situation in Indian cricket. Shameful, not only because Sachin Tendulkar's men failed to win a single Test match in a whole year or lost a staggering 23 one-day Internationals out of the 39 they played, but also for the manner in which they have repeatedly crumbled under pressure.

There were the odd flashes of brilliance, but on the whole the Indian team was consistent in a very negative way, losing matches from seemingly winning positions. The amateurish brand of cricket dished out by the Indians raised questions about their ability—or rather the lack of it—in the shorter version of the game.

Are Sachin Tendulkar's men the worst one-day side in the world? Opinions may vary, but the naked truth is that Indian cricketers have shown time and again that they are yet to grasp the grammar of one-day cricket.

No wonder most of the world

records in one-dayers have come against India.

India is perhaps the only side in the world which can chase a 300-plus target with two of their top bassmen hitting centuries and yet finish just two runs short in the end as it happened in Colombo versus Sri Lanká.

But what makes India such a poor one-day side? It is a combination of factors really. Unimaginative leadership, players' inability to adapt or improvise, little or no tactical input from the coaches, poor physical-related bunglings and the lack of enough opportunities in domestic cricket to practise, have all combined to make the Indians the favourite whipping boys in international cricket of late.

Batting in one-day cricket revolves around the run-a-ball doctrine. India hardly has a blaster like Sanath Jayasuriya in the team, but their batsmen just cannot rotate the strike. Being the worst runners between the wickets and extremely poor judges of a run, does not help their cause. If the rival bowlers fail to get them, they invariably end up running themselves out.

Instead of always being on the lookout for the ones and twos—the bread and butter of one-day cricket—



The infamous sight of an experienced transplagues like Azheruddin uperlikelay itie wiekts for an objective rease. Spielded or additional like high a between wiekts have not believe to grant a court of the property of the p

they go for the big shots only to perish foolishly. Improvisation is a word which does not exist in their dictionary.

One-day cricket demands that bowlers deny the batsmen any width and that they bowl straight and full during the slog. The Indian bowlers have shown as much discipline as a punch-drunk soldier in this respect. For ten years Dr. Ali Irani was irreplaceable. His brief included checking hotel bookings, collecting and disbursing players' dues, doing other odd jobs—all of course in good faith and spirit—apart from his medical duties. Naturally, no one was complaining.

Now he has been replaced by Dr. Ravinder Chadha, whose chief

would not even pass a kindergarten test.

His successor, Tendulkar, has proved himself to be no better. In fact, so disappointing has been Sachin as a skipper that the selectors have all but handed the captaincy back to Azhar.

The problem with Sachin is that his captaincy has been too predictable.

And whenever he has tried to be



There are simply no length and line bowlers around. The ones who play just try to do too much with the ball much too often resulting in either being hit or conceding extras.

In the field the Indians are always 20-25 plus. Under successive coaches the one thing the Indians haven't learned is to attack the ball, or get their body behind it while picking up. And their throwing arms being what they are, one does not have to be a Jonty Rhodes to convert ones into twos.

In the era of professionalism, India is the only team which is yet to have a qualified physical trainer for the team.

Mere often than not, if Tendulkar lost his wicket early then India perished without putling up a fight. Rebut Dravid (extreme right) was elten the demage controller for India, but he was dropped from the team after Sharjah for recease heat known to the selectors.

occupation over the last 20 years has been first class cricket. It is therefore no wonder that the Indians are possibly the most unfit side on the international circuit.

Then comes the matter of stewardship. Mohammed Azharuddin may be the most successful indian captain to date. But, and a leader of men, he

innovative, his moves have been bereft of any cricketing logic.

The promotion of Robin Singh to No.4 versus Pakistan in Sharjah or sending in Rahul Dravid at No.3 against the West Indies with the asking rate climbing, are just-a few examples of tactical mistakes which the Indian think tank has been committing with inipunity.

In a one-day game there is simply no margin for error. In a situation where even a marginal mistake tends to becomerang, the Indians with their poor game sense, have been time and again guilty of letting the advantage

GLOOM AND DOOM

A look at India's performance from January to December, 1997

1997	TOURNAMENT/SERIES	OPPONENTS	VENUE	RESULT
	Standard Chartered		Bloemfontein	
	Triangular		-	
	Standard Chartered		Paarl	
	Triangular		Port Elizabeth	
	,		East London	
	** ·		Pretoria	
	•		Benoni	
	Final		Durban	
	Replayed final		Durban	
	Tour of Zimbabwe Tour of WI		Bulawayo Port of Spain	
			Port of Spain Port of Spain	
	" "		St. Vincent	
	,, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		Barbados	
	Independence Cup		Bangalore	
	,,		Mumbai	
	n Anto Cour	Section 1	Chennai	
	Asia Cup		Colombo	
	"		Colombo	
	Final		, r	
	Tour of Sri Lanka		,,	
	"		,,	
	" "		**	
	,,		_ "	
	Sahara Cup		Toronto	
	"		,,	
	"		"	
	"		**	
	"		"	
	Tour of Pakistan		Hyderabad	
	"		Karachi	
	. ,,		Lahore	
	Champions Trophy		Sharjah	
	,		,,	
	Sri Lanka tour of India		,, Guwahati	
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34	1()	73		5

STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTIO

DOBBY SIMPSON Well, he hardly needs an introduction. The legendary former Australian captain is one of those versatile cricketers who has excelled in every sphere of the game. Be it taking on the fearsome fast bowlers while opening the batting or leading from the front with typical Aussie aggression, Simpson's record speaks for itself.

Even when he came out of retirement at the ripe age of 42 to come to the rescue of a beleaguered Australian side in the wake of Kerry Packer's 'circus' in 1977-78, his astute man-management helped Australia win the series 3-2 against a 'full' Indian team led by Bishen Singh Bedi.

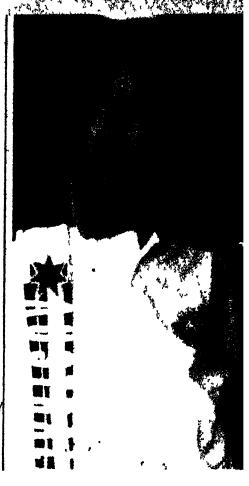
Later, during his tenure as a coach Australia won the Reliance Cup in 1987, and reached the final in 1996 besides earning the tag of unofficial world champions.

Impeccable credentials by any yardstick. India could not have got a better man to handle the senior team which, under successive amateur coaches and a captain, still learning the ropes, is like a rudderless ship. However, it remains to be seen whether 'consultant' Simpson can get India out of the rut and send it galloping towards the 1999 World Cup in England.

The task is onerous in itself. The setting up of a nine-member preparatory committee with the likes of Sunil Gavaskar and Kapil Dev, may appear to be a good idea, but in reality it could be the classical case of too many cooks spoiling the broth.

There is Anshuman Gaekwad, for example. The newly-appointed coach's ego was on display at Sharjah. He not only made a tactical blunder by promoting Robin Singh to No.4 ahead of Sachin Tendulkar—especially with another left-hander at the crease—but justified it later by saying that all those who questioned this decision "did not know their cricket." Falling in that category, among countless others, were Geoffrey Boycott and Sunil Gavaskar.

Simpson will have to nurse Gaekwad's ego before getting to work on the





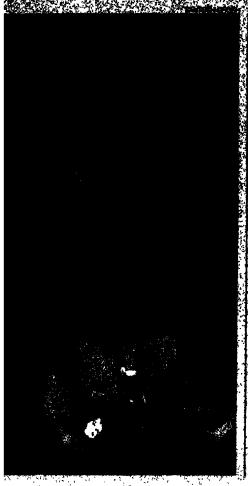
The Indian think tank. Sachin Tendulker and vice-captain Ajay Jadeja with coach Anshuman Gaekwad (back to camera). Predictable and unimaginative

slip Even letting their opponents turn the tables at times

For someone who lives, breathes and eats cricket, Sachin has certainly been a very slow learner. He has not been helped in his endeavour by former cricketers-turned coaches whose grasp of the nuances of limited overs cricket is truly limited.

If one thing has been proved beyond doubt, it is that former cricketers do not necessarily make good coaches, especially in the Indian context. Cricket is perhaps the only game where a coach does not need to

XX's decision to appoint Bobby Simpson as a consultant to the Indian cricket team gars well for the country's cricketing fortunes



cricketers. Waiting for his turn as the national coscints Kristinania; lieri Stikkentit, a fine one-day cricketer, but like Sandeep Patif and Madanisi, is hardly an authority on piatters technical.

Much would depend on the brief given to Simpson by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), for the Australian to be successful. In plain terms, just how much of a say will be have in technical, tagtiged matters as well as the day to day functioning of the feam.

Will he have the final say? Or will his job be restricted to giving advice we he only be responsible for drawing up plans or will he be responsible for limplementing them as well? The BCCI has to clearly consider all this before drawing up the Simpson contract.

There is no point in having a person of Simpson's calibre in an ornamental position. What the Indian team needs is a professional manager/coach and a top-flight physical trainer.

In the last five years, India have not won matches tactically, but at the same time, unfailingly let slip matches from seemingly winning positions. The coaches have come and gone, but the results have remained negative.

The batsmen make the same mistakes, the bowlers bowl the wrong line or length, the running between the wickets never loses its comic value and the fielding languishes in the zone between mediocrity and pathetic.

Call him a consultant or by any other name, but Simpson's must be a very much hands—on job. There can be no short cuts and no overnight solutions. Any move otherwise can only lead to the BCCI burning its fingers. Are the officials listening?

Sumit Mukherjee

have a formal degree. Yet, India's experiment with former players as coaches continues.

Geoffrey Boycott put it very succinctly the other day. According to the Yorkshireman 90 per cent of the decisions a captain takes during a match can be taken as easily by any given spectator in the stands. "It is the other 10 per cent a captain does, or does not do, that matters." The Indian team management has been doing woefully little in the last category.

One can hardly blame these former players. They simply do not have the background to foot the coaches' bill. Ajit Wadekar had retired long before India played its first official ope-dayer. Sandeep Patil's strokeplay was ideal for the shorter game, but his attitude

was fit only for weekend club cricket. Madanlal did play a key role in India's World Cup victory in 1983, but he had nothing to offer to the team except his fighting spirit. And Anshuman Gaekwad has always been a Test batsman, a stayer, who was hardly known for his one-day skills.

Instant cricket has shown that any side which has dared to be different—take uncharted paths and calculated risks, be it pinch-hitting or opening the attack with a spinner—has, more often than not, come up trumps.

Yet, no Indian captain or coach has had the nerve to innovate in a bid to surprise.

Springing surprises, of course, remains the sole prerogative of Indian selectors. For every laudable decision

they make, they bungle four. As in the case of coaches, none of the current five-member team has much experience with the hustle and bustle of pyjama cricket.

No wonder VVS Laxman becomes a one-day specialist overnight after being branded as a Test batsman earlier in the year.

Any self-respecting selector would have summarily given the boot to Azhar for the stupid manner in which he ran himself out against the West Indies in Sharjah. But, in their collective wisdom the selectors thought that a tongue-lashing would be enough.

Having botched on Azhar's removal, they committed mayhem with the rest of the team. The axing of



Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Prasad and Saba Karim was as bereft of logic as the Thar Desert of greenery.

Ramakant Desai may have been a very good bowler in his time, but that does not make him a good judge of players. His heart condition hardly permits him to go out on talent scouting trips, which some of his junior colleagues treat as all-expenses paid holidays.

Twice they had plotted to remove Sachin from the hot seat—once before the Asia Cup and again before the Sharjah meet—during the course of the year.

Now, Sachin may not go down in history as the best Indian captain, but having rushed him into the job, the selectors now seem to be in an unusual hurry to remove him. Tendulkar's series-wise appointment is not helping his confidence one bit. The

If someone impressed everyone right through the year it was the Prince of Calcutta. Saurav Ganguly's consistency with the bat and ball was an example that all his teammates could have emulated, but nobody did

selectors seem to forget that their primary task is confidence building, not shattering it.

Finally, the Board cannot escape its share of the blame. Considering the fact that India played 39 one-dayers in 1997 and.....in 1996, the average Indian first class cricketer hardly got to play any one-day cricket. Hardly enough time was there to fine-tune the cricketing talents.

After a brief experiment, the Deodhar Trophy, the BCCI's premier one-day tournament involving the zones, is back to its knockout format, which means the two finalists get to play just three matches. The others, one or two, weather permitting.

Similar is the case with the Wills Trophy, again a knockout meet. The only other one-day games available to our first class cricketers are the Wills Trophy qualifiers, played before every zonal Ranji trophy match.

In short, there are simply not enough opportunities for Indian players to hone their one-day skills. As a result, they are carrying the pyrotechnics to three or four-day matches which comprise the bulk of our domestic cricket.

But then, who cares?

Those who should, have, in fact, hardly covered themselves with glory in the course of the year. If performances on the field were shameful, the events off it were disgraceful.

Betting and match-fixing allegations by Manoj Prabhakar may



PHOTOGRAPHS KAMALJULKA

have failed to hit the bull's eye in the absence of any clinching evidence and the all-rounder's low credibility, but it did muddy the political waters in the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

Just as the Board had successfully buried the allegations under Justice Y. V. Chandrachud's probe reportwhich cleared everyone-came the Indore ignominy.

For the first time in the game's history a match was abandoned due to a treacherous pitch after just three overs being bowled. As the whole world watched, the BCCI top guns tried to pass the buck in a poor cover-up exercise.

The Board mandarins, had, earlier in the year, engaged in one of the most bitterly fought elections which had to be put off the first time around as

Tendulkar with Geoffrey Boycott. With his form having boycotted him for a major portion of the year Sachin did not have much to smile about...neither did the Indian fans

vards of dirty linen was washed in public.

Such was the turmoil both on and off the field that two historic moments in Indian cricket were all but lost in the ruins.

Jagmohan Dalmiya's elevation to the highest position in the ICC—the first Indian to be elected to the top post in the world body-and India's unprecedented run in the Sahara Cup which saw them thrash arch rivals Pakistan in the first four games—had all but become forgotten chapters in a year which also marked the 50th Year of Independence.

Dalmiya's assumption of the ICC

presidentship was as much a victory for Indian cricket as for democratic norms which had been unashamedly been subverted last year by those who wanted to cling on to power.

And Saurav Ganguly emerged from the shadows of his Lord's hundred to turn 1997 into a year of celebration The Prince of Calcutta really played like a king against Pakistan in Toronto as well as in Karachi where Rajesh Chauhan returned Javed Miandad's compliments—albeit more than a decade later-with a last over six off Saglain.

But it was the Sharjah debacle which really nullified the gains from Toronto and Pakistan. Even the first win over Sri Lanka—only the second since the Wills World Cup-at Guwahati could not lift the gloom that has descended on Indian cricket and its thousands of supporters and fans

TAKING A STEP BACKWARD

After the dumping of Amal Dutta by Mohun Bagan, it will not be smooth sailing for new coach T. K. Chathunni

BY DHIMAN SARKAR

Y sacking Amal Dutta, the coach of Mohun Bagan, a section of the officials are convinced that they have taken a giant step forward in upholding the club's lofty ideals of integrity, principles and righteousness. But if performance is used as the yardstick it may turn out to be a retrogressive step.

Dutta got the boot because Mohun Bagan's general-secretary Anjan Mitra felt he was involved in "anti-club activities." Significantly, Mitra stopped short not only of substantiating his charge but—this is important—never gave the coach a chance to present his side of the story.

Instead, Mitra flaunted copies of what was purportedly the conversation, recorded on tape, which took place between Dutta and him, which, he thought, was evidence enough of the coach's hand in rigging the inconsequential Rovers Cup tie against Churchill Brothers.

Dutta, it was alleged, had not played fair. But by refusing to pay out his remaining contract (Rs.72,000 till March 31, 1998) is Mohun Bagan going by the ground rules on ethics? Also, was getting Chathunni's services without seeking his former employers Salgaocar's permission in sync with the ideals of fair play?

Clearly, Mitra, Mohun Bagan's only decision maker, is confused. What comes out amid all this confusion, however, is that the

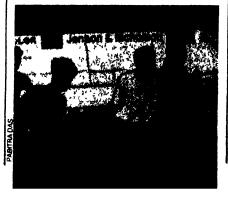
green-and-maroon brigade's chances in the National League have been dealt a body blow.

I am not condoning match-fixing but am trying to view the episode in a proper perspective. As P.K. Banerjee put it, "Rigging is an old habit and —unless it involves pecuniary benefits—is very, very difficult to prove"

Even Bruce Grobbelaar, one of the then English Premier League's most famous goalkeepers, and John Fashanu got only suspended sentences from the Football Association (FA) and were acquitted by the court of law for want of proof.

If Mohun Bagan played a dull goalless draw against Churchill, it was not with an eye on making a quick buck but because Dutta genuinely felt the draw would help them set up a semi-final clash against JCT, a team Bagan had beaten twice in Delhi and one he thought was a lot weaker than East Bengal, his other probable opponent. That it turned out to be a

Chathunni with his former wards from Salgaocar club. In his new assignment in Calcutta, will he be able to bring success to Mohun Bagan in the National League?



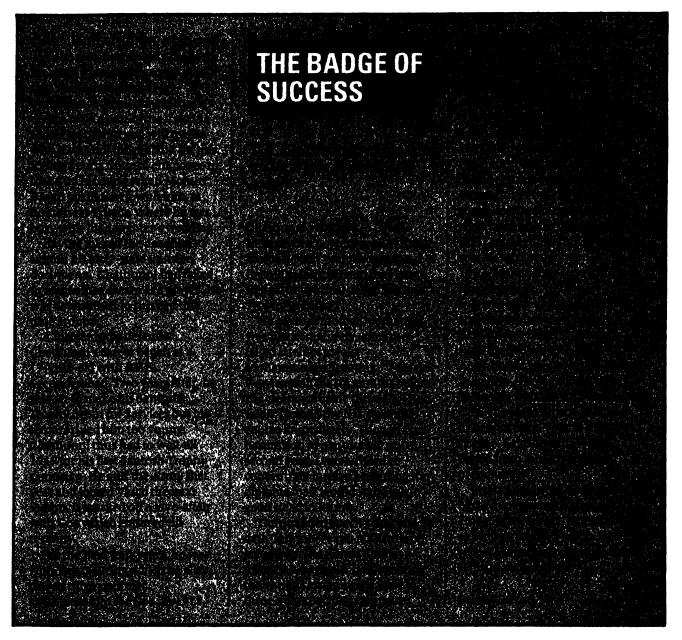
Himalayan blunder (the millmen thrashed Mohun Bagan 3-0) is another matter.

Mohun Bagan played 41 matches under Dutta, winning 30 and losing just three. They scored 84 goals and bagged the DCM Trophy, the Calcutta Super Division League and the Naogaon Independence Cup. They also finished runners-up in the Durand Cup and were eliminated in the semi-finals of the Kalyani Black Label Federation Cup—a 1-4 thrashing from East Bengal—as well as their in-famous Rovers Cup campaign. The only tournament they failed to reach the semi-final was the IFA Shield. No other team has a better record this season.

Statistics may fail to convince all the sceptics but, win or not, Mohun Bagan's showing, it has to be conceded, gave flagging spectator interest in soccer a leg up. For samplers, refer to the 1,31,000 that came to watch the national club championship semi-final held at the Salt Lake Stadium at Calcutta.

At the best of times, predicting the future is an onerous task. Mohun Bagan may still go on to do well in the National League. A couple of good victories, just like a couple of good overs in a one-day match, and all equations can change. However, all present indications, point to the contrary.

Aberrations notwithstanding, a coach needs time to adapt. The relationship between players and coaches is never unidirectional and both sides have to warm up to it. That



too takes time. By the time Chathunni and his charges do hit it off, Mohun Bagan may be beyond hoping.

Also, no coach will let the status quo prevail as far as the playing style is concerned. Dutta's "diamond" had two defensive midfielders in Satyajit Chatterjee and Debjit Ghosh, two attacking medios in Basudeb Mondal and Amit Das, a three-man defence and as many in attack. Chathunni has reverted to 4-3-3, with the veteran Satyajit being brought back into an attacking role.

It took over two months for Mohun Bagan to adapt to Dutta's system. Even if it takes half that time to get used to Chathunni's "simple" method, the League may be out of their grasp.

That the ways of Calcutta football are unknown to Chathunni too does not help his cause. He is not used to handling footballers, weary from season-long battle. Before the National League, Salgaocar had played around 15 matches. Mohun Bagan, on the other hand, have exceeded 40.

The players, therefore, are tired and that compounds problems for a coach who prefers a hard-funning, no frills, physical brand of football. Dutta, having put them through the paces all

season, would have known exactly how to pace his training schedules so that the players get the optimum recovery period.

Mohun Bagan may also miss certain players too if the All India Football Federation (AIFF) sticks to the 45-match rule. Once again, Dutta would have been better placed to handle that situation, familiarity being his strong point.

In a chain reaction, Chathunni's appointment has meant that three clubs have had to change coaches. Dutta went to Churchill and Shabbir Ali joined Salgaocar. All three have an uphill task.

A CHRISTMAS BREAK



Brazilian soccer star Ronaldo embraces his girlfriend, model Suzanna Warner in the garden of his parents' home in Rio De Janeiro on Christmas Day. Ronaldo had come to spend a week's holiday with his parents. He announced that he would marry Suzanna after the World Cup in France this year

All Allout Dinks

V Sportswinks, Nov. 973 compile cricketing data, they are not always to be inhering their relevance and circumstances in which the events/records happened. For example, preparing a hist of circketers being our without secoring. For academic interest, the list is okey but should we treat a Gavaskar's duck with that of a Chandre equally? Certainly not

The list comprises mostly of bowlers and tail-enders who contribute in a positive way to their teams by taking wickets and thus justify their selection. They are not known for their batting prowess at all. Why should we look down upon them simply because they failed to open their accounts?

Any schoolboy cricketer will outscore Calledge on any given day! Shall we call it a record of sorts? This reminds me of the old tale of the dog biting the man and vice versa, in which the latter only descrives news coverage not the former.

Herice we should take into account whether a Gavaskar, a Gatting of a Ylv Richards registered ducks and this should be always referred to as and when necessary. Why should we undecessary to be one premary by a security of a parable of a security by a same what percent is a security as a security of the processary when the burn the same what percent as a security as a security as a security of the same when the same as a security as a security of the same when the same as a security of the same when the same as a security of the same when the same as a security of the same as a securi



Crowd Behaviour

PROPOS Sumit Mukherjee's article, 'Losing Control' (Oct.'97). By crossing the fence, Inzamam-ul-Haq had displayed what happens when a spectator crosses his limit.

Not only the players should be careful of their behaviour but at the same time the spectators should also be cautious

The ground officials proved irresponsible. In the write-up, nothing had been written about what Inzamam had heard? What forced him to behave in a barbarous way?

AMIT BHATTACHARYA, Tinaukia

READERS' FORUM

RADERS are invited to send Contributions to the Reader's Forum page. All submissions should be typed neatly on a white foolscap paper, accompanied by a passport size colour photograph. The articles should be not more than 600 words long and should deal with interesting issues concerning sport.

February Manue

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As a regular visitor to the Deltal Tennis Association and the Maharasinira State Laver Tennis Association in Muribal J have noticed that criciot whe main subject of discussion on the tennis court. Not only do the coaches and markets discuss cricket acone; on court, they often play the game while finds trainers are with the physical trainer in fact, even some of the better trainers at those places mostly talk about cricket all the time.

This cricket manie isn't only is be suithed the grassicous level. Sometime pack, the IIP hunds world renking sacet was indicate the capital. The indiate players white shared copins to the guest house, had drayer relatives allower the walls of this rooms and played crickes throughout their free time, having palletantic allower. This affects a section and part of the capital sections and palletantic allower. This affects a section and a section and their free time, having palletantic allower. This affects a section and a section and their sections.

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LOSS OF CREDIBILITY

Justice Chandrachud's clean chit to players and officials has not removed the suspicion that betting and match-fixing is rampant in India and Pakistan. Unless a thorough and impartial enquiry is done, the national passion for cricket will diminish rapidly

BY SHEVLIN SEBASTIAN

JUSTICE CHANDRACHUD has absolved the cricketers of all betting and match-fixing charges. But a sneaking suspicion has now entered the public mind. It is the Ben Johnson syndrome. After the famed sprinter tested positive for drugs and send shock waves around the world, medal winners thereafter were always viewed through the prism of that failed drugs test. Is Michael Johnson clean? What about Carl Lewis or Sergei Bubka or Merlene Ottey? The innocence of athletics was destroyed forever.

Something similar is happening in cricket at present. When there is an inexplicable mini collapse during a one-day game or when a batsman plays a rash shot and gets out, especially those who are under the cloud of suspicion like Ajay Jadeja, Mohammad Azharuddin, Nayan Mongia and even Sachin Tendulkar, (rumours, terrible rumours are flying about these days), people say it is done on the orders of the bookies.

Last month, before the Champions Trophy in Sharjah began, a fan replied on asking whom he thought would be the winner. "That depends on whom the bookies want as the winner. God, I wish they would allow India to win." This sort of cynical talk is very damaging to the sport.

Here are some other rumours: all the matches of the Wills Challenge Cup in Pakistan had been fixed.

Wasim Akram received Rs.5 crores by the bookies to sit out the crucial quarter final against India in the '96 World Cup. (The amount is quite plausible, since the turnover of betting for a India-Pak one dayer is to the tune of Rs.100 crores). This rumour has still not died down. Wasim can deny the allegation till he becomes blue in the face but the



Justice Chandrachud's four-month long enquiry was an eyewash. He had no judicial authority at all. Surprisingly, he did not interview a single bookie or a policeman. He seemed, from eye-witness accounts, not too keen to find out the truth



suspicion persists.

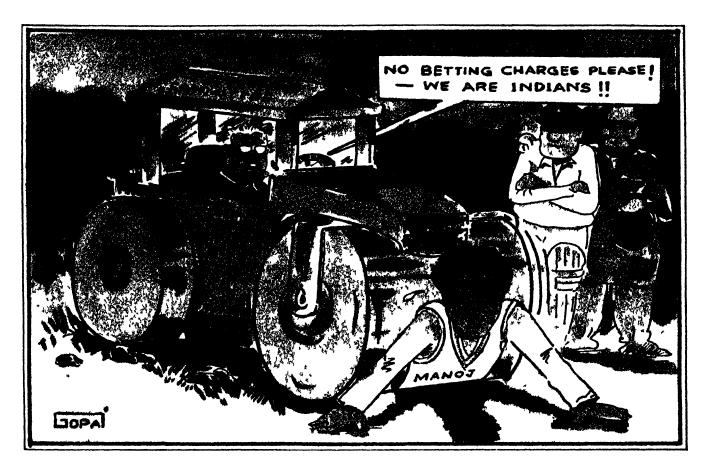
An ex-colleague recalled walking into Salim Malik's hotel room during a tournament in Sharjah and heard him talking to somebody on the phone. From the conversation, it became clear to him that the person on the other side of the wire was a bookie. How does he prove it? Perhaps if he managed to surreptitiously press the 'play' button on his dictaphone.

Does it mean that when Shane Warne and Tim May made their allegation of being offered a \$120,000 bribe by Malik, they were right? Or was Malik truly innocent as he proclaimed he was. It's clear now that either Warne or Malik is lying.

What about Mushtaq Mohammad's offer of \$100,000 to Allan Border to lose a Test match at Karachi in 1994. When Border publicised the matter, Mushtaq Mohammad replied that he meant it as a joke. \$100,000 is not a joking matter. Border, clearly, did not think of it as a joke.

What about Aamir Sohail's outburst against senior Pakistani cricketers? And Rashid Latif's accusation that senior players including Malik are involved in fixing matches. And our own home-grown Manoj Prabhakar who levelled his own accusations....

Interestingly, all allegations involve



only India or Pakistan Can there be smoke without a fire, ask the cynics? There must be some truth somewhere that so many people have made so many accusations

Justice Chandrachud's four month long enquiry was an eyewash. He had no judicial authority at all. Surprisingly, he did not interview a single bookie or a policeman. He seemed from eye-witness accounts not too keen to find out the truth. The general public was also convinced that he was not going to find anything earth-shattering. The good news is that Justice Chandrachud has lived up to that billing. So who is the BCCI fooling?

There is an urgent need for an honest and impartial enquiry. The CBI could investigate the matter but this bungling organisation has such a besmirched credibility that the chances are high that they will be that the original the culprits. Sadly, a P ib ic Interest Litigation which had



A top-flight cricketer earns between Rs.20-40 lakhs a year, depending on the endorsements that he gets. That is a large sum of money in a poor country like India where the per capita income is Rs.9350. So. if. after earning such huge sums of money, he still hankers for more, then it is sheer greed that is motivating him. He should be punished for that



been filed was recently withdrawn for reasons best known to the litigant Yet, something has to be done quickly to clear this atmosphere of suspicion and intrigue

One way out is to legalise gambling in cricket. If gambling in horse racing is legal, why can't the same thing be done in cricket? That will enable the alleged nexus between the cricketers the journalists, the bookies and the underworld to be broken.

In countries like England and Australia, gambling in cricket is legal What has prevented us from doing so? It is pretentious humbug to say that gambling is harmful when it is so widespread (Like all vices in life, you do it at your own risk) At least, by making it legal, we can reduce the chances of all sorts of nefanous activities from taking place

Another way out is to make players who allegedly indulge in match-fixing have their careers at risk. A prospect of being banned from the game should be introduced. As soon as one

CARTOONS GOPAL SARKAR NOW THEY CALL ME an Allrounder – BECAUSE I HAVE ALREADY PROVED MYSELF IN BOTH BATTING BETTING.

cricketer is caught, (of course, how to do that is a big problem), the rest will quickly abandon their links with the bookies. Fear, as it has been seen right through human history, has always been a good deterrent.

One cannot understand why cricketers do indulge (if it is true) in match fixing and betting Consider this, a top-flight cricketer earns between Rs 20-40 lakhs a year, depending on the endorsements that he gets That is a large sum of money in a poor country like India where the



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This scandal, again if it is true, is sending the wrong signals to the next generation who regard these players as icons. Money is everything, and the rest like principles and integrity is bullshit, is not a good message to pass on. It does not help in the setting up of a just, civil and lawful society

Something has to be done and done fast. Otherwise, the sun will set on the cricket game in India sooner than later.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

INAM-UR-R

BY NOVY KAPADIA

DMIRED by contemporaries for his fighting spirit and skills, adored by the fans for his delightful dribbling and entertaining playing style, Inam-ur-Rehman was the hockey star of the sixties who never got the recognition he deserved. His fighting spirit, and refusal to be sycophantic to the hockey establishment of India, led to several glaring acts of discrimination and omission, notably the '64 Tokyo Olympics and the '66 Bangkok Asiad.

He first played for India in Test matches against Japan in 1963 and finished as the top scorer with 15 goals in four matches. He also played in the '66 European tour, the '66 Japan tour and numerous Tests at home. However, when it came to the prestigious events like the Asian Games or Olympics he was invariably guillotined. Branded a rebel without a cause, Inam was more sinned against than sinning. The unjust dismissals still rankle. Seated in his comfortable three-bedroom house in a posh South Delhi colony, Inam still recalls the reasons why he was denied his due merit.

He says, "During my graduation days at Aligarh Muslim University, Ashwini Kumar, the former Inspector-General of Punjab Police, asked me to join his force as a sub-inspector. However, wearing a uniform did not appeal to me and so I shunned the offer. Ashwini Kumar never forgave me for this act and I paid the price. If I had joined Punjab Police, I could have played three or four Olympics."

Instead he was chosen just once for the Olympics in 1968 at Mexico. He was selected because the maestro, the late Dhyan Chand intervened and gave several press statements that sending a team to the Olympics without Inam was unthinkable. Even at Mexico he was not given a fair deal. Inam was picked for just two matches against Japan in the league phase which India had to win to qualify and he played in the fight for the bronze medal vs West Germany. In all the matches he helped India win.

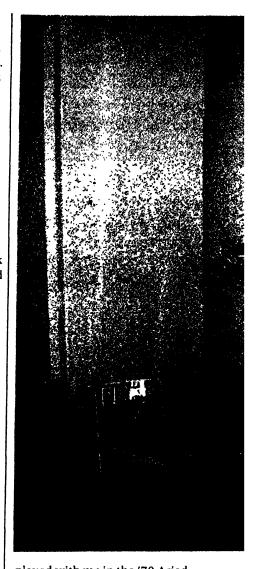
After the '68 Mexico Olympics, Inam and Balbir Singh of Railways were suspended for allegedly hobnobbing and carousing with the Pakistan players after they won the gold medal. Inam says, "It was just an excuse to drop me. I have never drunk in my life." Balbir's career was revived but Inam was never chosen again to play for India in an international match.

On sheer merit, dribbling skills and distribution, he was without peer in Indian hockey in the sixties. The legendary Ashok Kumar, who scored the match winner in the final of the '75 World Cup, says, "If Inam had



If Inam had played with me in the '70 Asiad (Bangkok), the '71 World Cup (Barcelona) and the '72 Olympics (Munich), we would have beaten Pakistan in all these three tournaments and won the gold medal each time. —Ashok Kumar





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Inam's biggest regret is that he never played against Pakistan during his illustrious career. It was not just Ashwini Kumar's prejudice and Punjab's domination of the hockey establishment which prevented Inam

EHMAN

Meet the legendary inside-left hockey star of the sixties who never got the recognition he deserved



from being selected against Pakistan. In the 1960s, the wounds of Partition were still raw; a perverse theory prevailed that Indian Muslims would never go all out on the hockey field against Pakistan. Inam became a victim of such pernicious thinking.

During his halcyon days, he was often omitted from the national side on flimsy grounds. For instance, when at his peak, he was dropped for the '66 Bangkok Asiad, as he was branded rebellious and

Inam-ur-Rehman pictured with his devoted wife Shamim

hot-headed. Instead, players of much lesser calibre like Inder Singh of Northern Railway and Tarsem Singh of Punjab Police were chosen. Like Job in the Old Testament, the stockily-built Inam-ur-Rehman also suffered the "slings and arrows of unjust fortune."

Recalling the past, Inam still does not regret his volatile behaviour on

the field. He says, "The anger within me made me a fighter and it was my fighting spirit that enabled me to become a winner. I was a perfectionist and so at times challenged the umpire's decisions."

This talented inside left, represented East Bengal, Mohun Bagan and Indian Airlines in his playing career which stretched from the early sixties to the mid-seventies.

His love affair with hockey started as a toddler in the backstreets and playfields of Bhopal, when in nearly all localities, hockey clubs existed. Hero worship led to his infatuation with hockey. He admired the silky dribbling skills of a talented inside-left Shaukat who played for the Bhopal Electricity Board.

"He moved on the field like a cobra," recalls Inam. A student of Sayeeda School, Inam spent hours on the field learning the skills of hockey. There was no formal coaching. He learnt whilst watching others play and practised for hours to reach perfection.

Success followed. He was selected for the All India Schools team in the 1959 Senior Nationals at Hyderabad. He scored four goals in a 8-0 triumph over Assam and was hailed as a future star. Next came the stint with Aligarh Muslim University. He played both hockey and football for his University. He even represented AMU in the prestigious, Durand, DCM and IFA Shield tournaments.

It was during his college days that he perfected his unique dribbling skills. He says, "I believed in individual practice and used to train on my own every morning. After exercise and running, I trained with other youngsters. I used to keep two boys on my side and we played against teams of seven to eight players. In this way, I mastered the art of ball possession and dribbling."

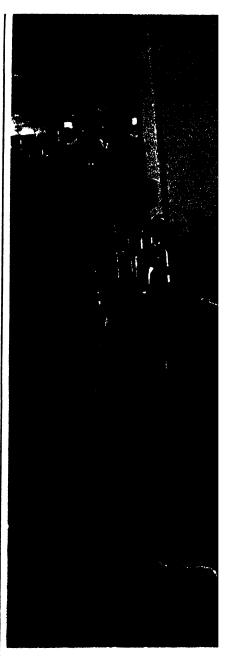
Inam also developed his own hockey sticks, a lighter version which used to weigh about 17 ounces which gave him greater flexibility of

He is a contented family man. Picture shows (from left) Fareha (his future daughter-in-law), wife Shamim and son Aamir Inam, a qualified mechanical engineer who is working in Dubai movement. East Bengal took him to play in the Calcutta League in 1963. He started with a princely sum of Rs 5,000 for the season, then a record in Calcutta hockey. Next season, he shifted to Mohun Bagan for a record sum of Rs.7,000.

Such was his popularity that the







next best payment was in the range of Rs.1,500-2000 which went to the Olympian right winger Joginder Singh. In Calcutta, Inam was known as "Gurudeva". He was provided a fully furnished flat by the club.

The next phase of his life was a shift to Indian Airlines which formed a team in 1968. He joined them on the advice of Matin Khan, a friend from Bhopal. It was the act of an iconoclast as he wanted to form a team to rival the supremacy of BSF and Punjab

When not watching sports on TV, inam-ur-Rehman likes to read the newspaper



Inam-ur-Rehmen inspects his Wellway gun, which he uses while hunting for partridges. His wife Shamim looks at some of the medals that her husband has won

Police. For the next sixteen years he served Indian Airlines with distinction as a player and coach and enabled them to win every tournament in the country, more than once.

Such was his craze for hockey that when he married a Bhopal girl Shamim Rehman in 1969, he told her that, "Hockey comes first and you are second." As a coach, Inam has had

lucrative stints abroad. He was
Argentina's coach during the '78
Buenos Aires World Cup and for
several years later. He also coached
Oman at Muscat from 1992-94.
However in India he was ignored
Only once has he served as an
assistant coach to Jhaman Lal Sharma
in the 1990 Beijing Asiad. In 1988, he
was sent as a manager to the 1st
Junior Asian Championships at
Karachi

The love for sport has not subsided even in middle age. Nowadays he plays golf as a way to relax and keep

fit He works as a Deputy Manager in the Indian Airlines at their Safdarjung airport office and looks after the reservations of sportspersons and VIPs. Either in the morning or after work he drives to the Air Force Golf Club and spends hours rehearsing strokes. Even at home after dinner, he practises putting on the carpet in his drawing room. During holidays, he indulges in his passion for shooting game. He does this on the outskirts of New Delhi.

Skill is a fetish for him He still practises keeping the ball in the air for



Golf is his new passion and he loves to practise at home

a long count. Inam believes, "Skill is developed through hours of practise. The stick must become part of your arm." He has not fully mellowed with age. Inam still feels that Indian Airlines have not given him his due promotion.

However, he is now a contented family man. On returning from office, he spends hours watching sports events on TV. His favourite sports are golf, tennis, football and hockey. The sportsperson he admires most is Diego Maradona. "Voh classic genius hai," Inam says. Amongst his contemporaries he admired attacking hockey players like centre forward Harbinder Singh, right-out Balbir Singh and Pakistan's left winger Samiullah. After his generation, he



Skill is developed through hours of practise. The stick must become part of your arm. —Inam-ur-Rehman



feels that Ashok Kumar was the only player of real class.

Inam is also a good cook and prepares a divine biryani and korma. His wife Shamim chips in and says, "He loves eating any good food and still relishes a well cooked meal." So after a hard day's work, Inam potters about in the kitchen. After dinner, he reads the newspapers carefully, if

there is no sport on TV. He also often jots down his thoughts on paper.

Nowadays he rarely coaches and spends more time on the golf course. His family life is successful and that gives him great contentment. His 27-year-old son, Aamir Inam, a qualified engineer who also did an MBA from AMU, is now working as a marketing manager in Dubai. Inam and his wife Shamim are now busy arranging Aamir's marriage to a Moradabad girl Fareha. His daughter Nadia is married in Muscat to an engineer.

Inam and his wife spend some months with their children abroad. However, he does not want to leave Delhi. The pace of life may have slowed down but there is still a fire in his eyes when he recalls the hockey exploits of the glorious sixties.

PHOTOGRAPHS: MOHAMMAD SHAFIQ

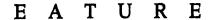




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A CONTRACTOR

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T is a typical Pakistani household. A seven-year-old is watching the TV screen very intently. He is watching a cricket game. The date is October 9, 1976. The venue is Lahore, Pakistan.

It's the first day of a Test match between Pakistan and New Zealand. Pakistan is batting. The score is 44/3. Out walks a young man looking upwards at the sun. He is short and thin. He takes long strides, keeps rolling his right arm around with bat in hand, then the left hand. Holding the bat in both hands, he turns his upper body sideways...all the time striding towards the pitch.

The camera closes in...a cool, calm look. A thick moustache and flowing hair. The face...a common Pakistani face, nothing charismatic, yet it is energetic. He rolls his alert eyes a bit. Then he stares at the sun again. The seven-year-old starts mimicking the young man's moves.

Right there and then on that day in 1976, many seven-year-olds became Pakistanis. Patriotic fervour was forever transfused in their veins. The young man had made fans for life.

MOINUDDIN HAMEED

One such seven-year-old is the author of this article in 1997. The young man's name...Javed Miandad.

Javed's debut was fantastic. Against Richard Hadlee and the New Zealanders, he got 504 runs in just five innings, with a double century that

still has him in the history books as the youngest double century maker. He got 163 in his maiden innings and set the tone for an outstanding career. His talent with the bat was obvious but there was something else that caught the eye. Something intangible and unexplainable, yet you knew it was there. Immense self confidence or this aura of invincibility or whatever you want to call it, Miandad portrayed to the crowd and to his team-mates an

assurance that he could be depended on The arrogance of youth was pretty obvious as he smashed three consecutive fours off Richard Collinge to get to his maiden hundred. When he retired from international cricket his Test record read: 43 fifties; 23 hundreds at an average of 52.57. (See box).

He had a distinction that no other batsman can probably match. Never once in his career did his average fall below 50. Never...ever. He was Mr. Consistency. But it's not the number of runs he scored but it's the way he scored them. As I look back at Pakistan cricket growing up, all I can remember is Javed walking in at 7 for 2 or 5 for 2 ..the batting in tatters, the opposition on top and that cool, calm and confident smile. Javed personified all that is good about Pakistan cricket and in many ways is responsible for forming or shaping Pakistan cricket into what it is today.

Javed's remarkable performances are numerous. Any famous win that Pakistan boasted of, during his career, featured him prominently. When Pakistan beat India in Lahore, with Imran hitting those sixes off Bedi, chasing a stiff target in a short time, Miandad was the one at the other end, running like a hare and pushing singles all the time.

His contribution was 62 (100 in the first innings) out of the 164 they needed to chase in 24.5 overs. He was the one running madly off the field waving his bat to celebrate the famous series win. When Mohsin hit that double hundred at Lords and the second innings required a quick chase, he was the one who opened with Mohsin to knock off the required runs to earn a ten wicket win.

When India came to Pakistan in 1982-83 for a six Test series, he was invincible. His 280 n o. in the Hyderabad win was his highest total. People say he was unlucky and that

There was a rivalry between Imran Khan and Javed Miandad although that did not prevent the latter from giving off his best for Pakistan

> Imran should have let him go for that 365 of Sobers. I have never heard Miandad complain about that.

When Pakistan beat India in India for the first time in 1986-87, he was the focus of the Indian bowlers and umpires. He saved the second Test with a 63 n.o. on the last day, before Pakistan took the last Test to win the series 1-0.

Though his Test contributions are tremendous, Miandad became a hero



of Pakistan cricket via his one-day exploits. His record read: 50 fifties, 8 hundreds with an average of 41.70.

His one-day record emphasises the fact that he was an all-round cricketer. Whether you needed fast runs or somebody to stick it out, he was there. His fielding and running between the wickets were always a treat to watch. During Javed's career, Pakistan won a lot of one day tournaments, climaxing in the 1992 World Cup win but it all started in the spring of 1986 in Sharjah. Pakistan had never won a tournament before that day and it was not because they had not come close. A prime example was that one wicket loss to the West Indians in the 1975 World Cup (Miandad played as a bowler) when they let the last wicket score 60 odd runs. The team did not believe it could win All of this was before that six at Shariah in 1986 that reverberated across the sub-continent for so many years.

I vividly remember getting ready to watch the game in the morning. I had a Physics final the next day. I was giving my Intermediate examinations. In Pakistan, your grades in your Intermediates pretty much determine your career. Of course I had a Physics book in my hand but I was glued to the tube. My mother was yelling at me for wasting my time, my father was not too happy either. Soon after the lunch, all of the above were glued to the tube with me!

he was playing a spinner. I remember him sweeping Kapil Dev to tine leg. He kept the scoreboard ticking throughout. Pakistan required 11 to win off Chetan Sharma's final over. On the fourth ball of the over Zulgarnain was bowled playing a wild

The anger on Miandad's face was obvious. He told Zulgarnain that he should have just taken a single to let him get the strike. The last man in was

Tauseef. He nudged the penultimate ball to cover and ran. Azharuddin picked the ball up cleanly and gently lobbed the ball at the stumps. Had the ball hit the stumps, Tauseef would have been gone. Azhar missed. You could see the agony written all over Azhar's face but I guess even the best of them lose it under pressure. Not Javed though

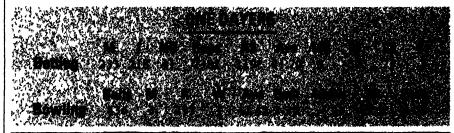
He was on strike with four to win off the last ball. A normal player would

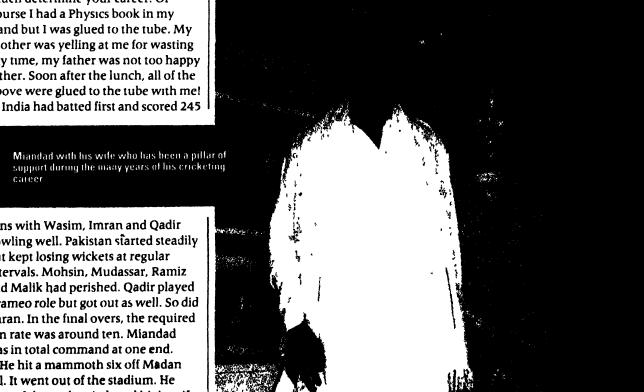
GLITTERING CAREER

TESTS

HS Runs Batting 8832 280* 52.57 124 189

Econ **Bowling** 1470 32 682 17 40.11 3-74 86.4 2.78





Miandad with his wife who has been a pillar of support during the many years of his cricketing

runs with Wasim, Imran and Qadir bowling well. Pakistan started steadily but kept losing wickets at regular intervals. Mohsin, Mudassar, Ramiz and Malik had perished. Qadir played a cameo role but got out as well. So did Imran. In the final overs, the required run rate was around ten. Miandad was in total command at one end.

He hit a mammoth six off Madan Lal. It went out of the stadium. He danced down the pitch and hit it as if have been wiping his brow or biting his lips. What was Miandad doing? He was surveying the field, counting the players. Checking to see if there were four inside the circle, less than three behind the square leg umpire on the leg side etc. His mind was working.

Chetan came in to bowl amid a roar from the crowd...a waist high full toss...Miandad swung it towards midwicket. .his hands immediately went up and he started running...Binny at the midwicket fence looked skyward...and Mushtaq's (expert commentator) scream, "It's a SSSIIIIIIIXXXXXXI!".

This six took Pakistan to a new level in cricket. India would not beat Pakistan in a one day game for a long long time in Sharjah, About 100 million people jumped up in Pakistan at the same time. It was registered on the Richter scale! This was more than

A thrilled Imran Khan being hugged by teaminates after Pakistan's fantastic victory over England in the '92 World Cup in Australia. A nation matured on that day

just another one day win. Miandad had forever changed the course of Pakistan's cricket history.

I will never forget him running madly with his bat in his right hand. That scene is forever etched in my brain. He ended up scoring 116 not out to take Pakistan to 248/9 In my opinion, it was the best ever one day innings played in terms of pressure and impact. He walked out to take the Man-of-the-Match award.

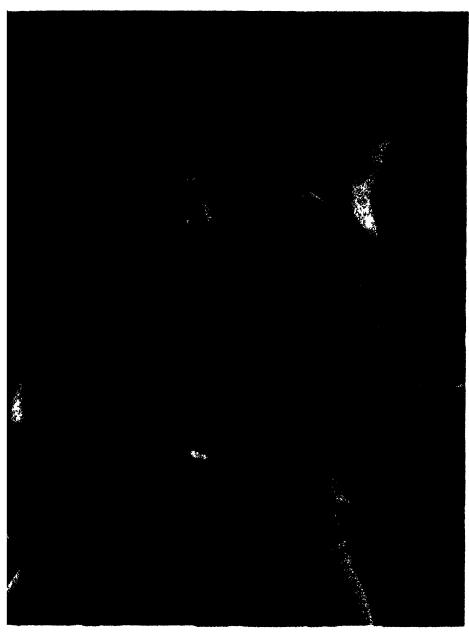
Tears kept rolling down his cheeks as he kept on smiling. He was humble. When Imran lifted the Cup, Miandad beamed. His contagious smile was affixed on every Pakistani's face. He had plotted a new course. Pakistan would go on to win the Nehru Cup in India and the next few Sharjah tournaments. Miandad would score eight consecutive one day half centuries.

As my friend Mohsin Ansari explains, "Isn't it true that this one hit would impact the India-Pakistan one day equation for the rest of the decade and even beyond? Isn't it true that this was not just a ball getting whacked over the boundary, but a man shaking the self confidence and hopes of an entire nation, while giving another nation a promise of bigger and better things to come? Isn't it true that before this six, India would whip Pakistan in any neutral or non-neutral ground as a routine matter, but after that, just could not find a way to beat them even in India.

"Not till long ago, and sometimes even now, every time these two teams step onto a field and India would get into a winning position, somehow, from some unknown place, the ghost of that one fateful Sharjah afternoon would come back to haunt them."

Miandad has played in all the World Cups to date. He is the highest scorer in World Cups as well. Pakistan probably had the best team in the '87 World Cup at home but they won the '92 World Cup in Australia. Imran was centre stage on that occasion too but Miandad was on-stage with his performances once again being exemplary. He was left out of the side before the Cup, claiming that he had dropped out or that he was out of





form. I can't remember which one was stated. After Saeed Anwar pulled a groin muscle, Miandad was recalled.

As Umair Khan relates, "In the 1992 World Cup, in the semi final against New Zealand, everyone remembers Inzamam's 60 off 37 balls that saw Pakistan through to the final. Miandad was not out at the day's end at 57. In the Final, everyone remembers Akram's dismissals of Lamb and Lewis. Coming in at 24/2 in 9 overs, Miandad, with Imran, took Pakistan to 163/2 in 39 overs. Cramps forced him to hit out [and get out] when on 59".

I remember after winning that Final, everyone was celebrating. Imran and Miandad's rivalry was known openly. Everyone knew they didn't see eye to eye. I saw Miandad approaching Imran and patting him on the shoulder. Visibly annoyed. Imran swivelled around. When Imran realised it was Javed, a huge smile came on his face and they hugged. That was the best moment of the '92 World Cup for me. Miandad always put his team before his own self. He was selfless. Quoting Mohsin Ansari again, "There were players before Javed with numbers better

than him, and as long as the game is played, there will be players in the future with better numbers. But only a few special ones will leave an impression on the game as big as he left behind. Javed Miandad is much bigger than his numbers; the whole is more than the sum of parts! Not that his numbers are anything to be ashamed of But the legend goes beyond that.

"Miandad is an attitude, Miandad is an inspiration. His is the blue-collar approach to cricket and his legend stems not from his glorious numbers, but from the love and admiration of millions of fans worldwide, and their belief that this guy was something special. And NOBODY, I repeat NOBODY, can take that away from him!"

There were so many intangibles to go with his great stats. I guess one of the earliest memories that I have of Javed is in Australia. Rodney Hogg was batting. Hogg played a ball to point where Javed was standing. The ball rolled to Javed and came to a halt a few yards before Javed as he walked towards it. Hogg left his crease to do a little bit of gardening on the pitch

Javed picked the ball up and tiptoed up to the wicket, without attracting Hogg's attention, and removed the bails. The umpire of course gave Hogg out and Hogg, out of frustration and disgust, smashed the stumps and left. Mushtaq, the captain, asked Hogg to come back.

Miandad was always cheeky. He was very competitive. He never lost hope. His energy and will to win never diminished. I remember that after Imran's retirement in 1992, he captained Pakistan to New Zealand for a one-off Test. In the last innings, New Zealand had to chase around 127 to win and they were coasting at 80 odd for 3. Any normal player or captain wold have lost hope. Most of our bowlers were dejected and were looking for a miracle.

Andrew Jones played a ball gently to square leg where Miandad was standing. The ball trickled to him and Miandad advanced towards it. The non-striker was a bit out of his crease and Miandad went towards the ball

with a motion intending to throw the wickets down at the non-striker's end The non-striker was alert and Miandad knew that He picked up the ball and balanced perfectly to throw it at the non-striker when suddenly at the last fraction of a second his arm changed direction and he threw the ball at the batting end Jones a couple of paces outside his crease along with the rest of the players and viewers was watching the non-striker The throw stunned everybody Jones froze The ball missed the one stump that Miandad had had to aim by inches and he held onto his floppy hat like he always did after a close shave Everybody on the Pakistan squad realised that this man had not given up hope that his mind was still working. The New Zealanders realised that this match was not over yet

The Pakistanis got a wakeup call a boost of energy. They bowled out New Zealand soon after for 93 and won the game. This particular incident will never be recorded as a statistic in a score book. Only those who played and those who watched will remember it forever.

I remember Richie Benaud once relating a story about watching Miandad bat in a county game. The field was spread out and the spinners were on Miandad was getting singles easily but no boundaries as the field was spread out Suddenly Miandad became uncomfortable against the spinners. There were a few balls that popped up at catchable height near the bat He got a few edges The captain and the bowler got encouraged and brought the field up and crowded Javed As soon as that happened he belted a few boundaries and got some quick runs Richie relates that it was obvious that Javed was playing with the minds of the opposition

In a Test series in Australia Javed had an altercation with Donnis Lillee Miandad had clipped the ball towards square leg and was running hard intent on getting two runs. Lillee was tanding on the side of the pitch at the nd of his follow-through, blocking

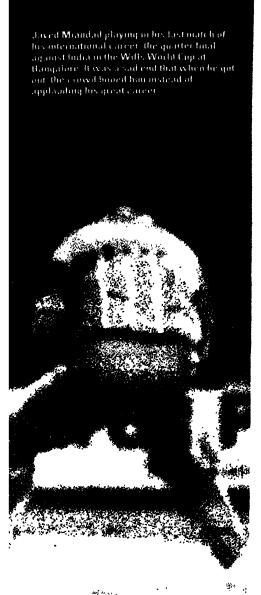


Miandad's way Since Miandad was concentrating on the fielder he did not see Lillee blocking his way till he hit him

Javed pushed Lillee aside The reaction from Lillee was that he kicked Miandad Javed got enraged and lifted his bat to scare him as Lillee hid behind the umpire who came to calin the situation down. It was all over the news the next day, Miandad was portrayed as an out of control madman on the field by the biased journalists. But Miandad had made his point. He had changed that attitude of low self-esteem that we

used to have He had made the world recognise that the Pakistanis will not bow down to anybody

I could go on and on with these stories but the best one is the one that I heard during the World Cup of 1992 Viv Richards is regarded by most as the greatest batsman ever Having retired by that time Viv was in the commentary booth in a West Indies-Australia game. He was asked a hypothetical question about who he thought was the best batsman. Vivian Richards said that if there ever came a time when he had to bet his life on a batsman, he would bet on Javed.





This six (in Sharjah in 1986) took Pakistan to a new level in cricket. India would not beat Pakistan in a one day game for a long long time in Sharjah. About 100 million people jumped up in Pakistan at the same time. It was registered on the Richter scale! This was more than just another one-day win

Miandad!

Javed has been lucky in a lot of respects but he has been very unlucky too. Captaincy is one example. I always thought that his was the best cricketing mind. When he was made captain of the Pakistan team the first time, he was too young. The seniors in the team with inflated egos in the Kerry Packer era refused to play under him.

He stepped aside. Miandad took over the captaincy whenever.Imran got hurt and did a great job. When Imran came back, Miandad stepped aside knowing that Imran was the crowd favourite. He didn't want to create a rift. The team was more important.

When Imran retired, Miandad was made captain. He won both the Test series that were played during his reign against New Zealand and England. He was later removed from the captaincy because of the team's performance in a one day tournament. The selectors said that Wasim Akram was the captain of the future. In my opinion, they either should not have made him the captain when Imran retired, if rebuilding was the idea, and if not, then they should

have persisted with him till he retired. He never got the respect he deserved as a cricketing mind. Even after all that he had to go through his record as a skipper is: out of 34 matches, won 14, lost 6. Rest drawn. This was a better (win percentage) than Imran and Mushtaq Muhammad.

Javed's last international match was in Bangalore, India. It was a World Cup (1996) quarterfinal against India. Another pressure cooker situation. Miandad had come back after a layoff of two years and it was obvious that his batting was not at its best but even then he had stuck it out and a bowler had not yet got him out in the tournament.

Once regarded as the best runner between the wickets, ironically, Miandad got run out in his last game that Pakistan lost eventually. I was overwhelmed as I saw my hero walking off the field. Javed was disappointed that he was not able to pull his team out of yet another difficult situation. The Indian crowd knew that this was Miandad's last game. They still remembered that six in Sharjah 10 years ago.

They knew that they will never see Miandad again so they wanted to leave him with a memory he probably will never forget. I know I will not. The crowd booed my hero off the field. He was still very gracious. Lifted his bat gently, kept his eyes to the ground and simply walked off into the pavilion. An era had ended and instead of a hero's goodbye, Javed Miandad was booed off the field.

I will never forgive the Indian crowd for that. I might forgive them for Kashmir and I might even forgive them for breaking up my nation but I will never ever forgive them for booing my hero. Then he came back home, where I thought he would be welcomed appropriately. But the hoopla of a loss to India had taken over and Miandad's retirement got lost in the middle somewhere.

Nobody mentioned it much. Till now, there is no documentary on Javed. If you are looking for a happy ending then don't...this is not an American tale, it's a Pakistani one.

HFSS has become the buzz word in the state of Andhra Pradesh renowned for its Golconda fort and Charminar monument 1 ast year from a rural area in the Guntur district of the state. India found a child prodigy in Parthipadu Harikrishna who won the world under 10 years chess championship at Menorca Spain. Now the latest whiz kid to emerge from Andhra Pradesh is another under 10 years world chess champion, this time a dapper diminutive girl. Koneru Humpy

Calm cool and confident Koneru Humpy retorts What Harikrishna can do I can do also She admits that during the world championships she was motivated by the success of Harikrishna and wanted to emulate his teat

Harikrishna's was a more romantic story From a rural background to world age-group chess champion is a long and winding road. In contrast Koneru Humpy is from Vijaywada Her father Koneru Ashok was a former chess champion in South India For his livelihood he taught chemistry in a local Vijayawada college Now he is a full time chess coach pre occupied with nurturing the prodigious talent of his daughter When asked how he supports his family of wife Lata daughter Humpy and young son Chandrahasa he mumbled Coaching and tuitions

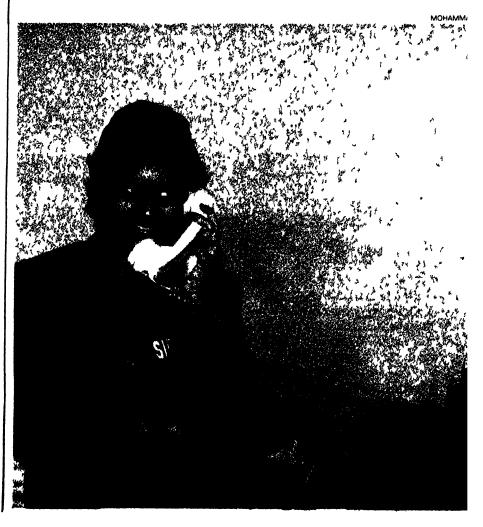
I ater Koneru Ashok explained his philosophy of life and said—I have to sacrifice to achieve higher goals. Watching Humpy play as a seven year old I realised that my daughter is a human chess computer something special so I wanted her to fulfill her potential so I have become her full time coach.

She also received a lot of encouragement from her alma mater the Siddartha Residential school at Edupugallu in Vijaywada. The Director of this school. Mr Vedde Ramakrishna Prasad is a chess buff and willingly agreed to sponsor. Humpy. He has been the Good.

Coneru Humpy receiving congratulations on he whose

"MY YEARS OF HARD WORK HAS PAID OFF"

Says Under-10 World Chess champion KONERU HUMPY



Samaritan for this chess-loving family. His steady support has enabled Koneru Humpy concentrate on chess without worrying about financial matters.

In the capital after winning the world title at Cannes, France, Humpy met the vice-president of India Mr Krishna Kant and was presented with a special watch. She was feted by several other dignitaries. However, her phlegmatic temperament enables her to take all this in her stride. In an interview to Sportsworld she showed that she is unaffected by her celebrity status and wants to concentrate on her ambition to become a world champion in women 5 chess. Here are excerpts from the interview.

When did you start playing chess? I started playing at the age of six years in 1993. I got interested in chess when I watched my father play at home.

At what age did you feel you had the talent to excel in chess?

When I won the Girls Under-10 years title at Mumbai last year. That win gave me a lot of confidence and I felt that I could cope with the best in the world in my age-group.

What were your feelings prior to the world championships at Cannes?

I was a little nervous but once I started to play, my nerves vanished After watching my opponents, my confidence grew as I knew that I could cope with all of them I felt really confident after beating Larissa Tokinar of Brazil in just 17 moves That was my quickest win and it gave me the confidence that I was in good form

What was your toughest match?

The 8th round tie against Spain's Vega Gutierrez The other ties were all okay, and I did not have many problems.

What did you feel after winning the world title?

(Beaming) A sense of relief that it was all over and massive happiness that I



had won Alter winning my last game against Anna Mazychuck of Ukraine, I realised I was world champion and my years of hard work had paid off I also thanked my father who is my coach and our generous sponsor (Her father Koneru

Ashok said at this juncture that, "So far, the sponsors Siddartha School have spent Rs 2 lakhs in developing Humpy's talent. They even paid for my ticket to France, so that I could guide Humpy in these championships. We are, indeed, very grateful to them)."

In what ways does your sponsor help you?

(speaking with promptings by the father) I get to use a computer at school, free education, lots of chess literature and my travel expenses are looked after

Did you have any problems with food or any other adjustment problems in France?

Not really, I am a non-vegetarian, so food was not really a problem. Also there was plenty of my favourite fruit the apple. I concentrated so much on the championship that I was not affected by the new place. (Her father adds "Humpy by nature is very placid and calm and adjusts to situations easily. She does not have an excitable temperament and is a very relaxed person.) "

Koneru Humpy is flanked by her father Koneru Ashok (left) and her main sponsor Mr Vedde Ramakrishna Prasad, Director of Siddertha Residential School. The sponsor has spent Rs.2 lakhs on her

Do you like playing attacking chess like Vishwanathan Anand or a positional game like that of Anatoly Karpov.

I am a slow player and believe in positional play My game is based on planning and thinking out all the possibilities before making each move (Her father who is also her coach says "She plays with a level of maturity which is excellent for her age. Her game is based on calculations and positional play)"

What are your hobbies?

Cycling and watching TV mostly movies I have very little time for hobbies or other sports as I have to study and spend four hours daily playing chess

Who are your favourite players? (with a smile) Vishwanathan Anand of course I want to be like him (As an

of course I want to be like him (As an afterthought) I also like the way Anatoly Karpov plays

What is your next ambition?

My next ambition is to win the world under-12 years title at Paris, in February 1998

Interview by Novy Kapadia and Ghaus Mohammed

THE BEST AND WORST OF TENNIS'97

PAUL FEIN looks back at the happenings in the world of tennis in the year that just got over

BEST AMAZING FEAT—Martina Hingis, the 16-year-old Swiss prodigy, won Wimbledon, the U.S.Open and the Australian Open and reached the French Open final to come within one victory of capturing a rare Grand Slam.

BEST SHOCKING UPSET

SERIES—Gustavo "Guga"
Kuerten, a colorfully attired,
20-year-old Brazilian, ranked only
66th, upset former French Open
champions Thomas Muster,
Yevegeny Kafelnikov and Sergi
Bruguera, plus former world No.4
Andrei Medvedev, to surprise
everyone, including himself, and
won the French Open.

BEST MELANIE MOLITOR
RETORT—Contemptuous of critics
who believe her own vicarious
ambition has cost her daughter,
Martina Hingis, her childhood,
Melanie Molitor retorted: "I never
myself had the feeling that I've
stolen her childhood. I mean, what is
it that she should be doing, playing
with puppies? Look at her: she's a
hap, by girl."

BEST QUOTE ABOUT

SAMPRAS—After being crushed 6-2,6-1,7-6 by Pete Sampras in the Wimbledon semifinals, an awed Todd Woodbridge quipped, "He's human, but not by much."

BEST COCKINESS—"I have the game to beat anyone. I am not intimidated by the thought of facing anybody. Martina Hingis? I'm looking forward to playing her or anyone else. Keep 'em coming," said Venus Williams just before Hingis trounced her at the Lipton Championships.

BEST BORG UPDATE—According to an April 30, 1997 Star Foreign Service report, Bjorn Borg, who lost a fortune in bad business deals, was hired by Club Med as a tennis coach and is working in the CM "village" in the Bahamas. The news was broken by his friend Yannick Noah who said: "Bjorn was so unhappy some years ago that he tried to commit suicide twice."

BEST TESTIMONIAL TO STEFFI—After practising with

Steffi Graf at the French Open, 1992 Olympic gold medalist Marc Rosset said: "I was impressed by the speed of her shots. I do understand that other players have problems against her because she has a slice shot which is incredible. I can tell you, she doesn't have to envy anybody on the men's tour."

BEST RIPOSTE—After losing a tie-breaker in the third-set cliff-hanger to Marcelo Rios, Jim Courier was belted with this question-comment at the post-match press conference:

Journalist—"You used to win matches like that."

Courier—"And you used to ask good questions, too."

WORST COMMENTARY ON

TOUR LIFE—After Lindsay
Davenport crushed former close
friend Mary Joe Fernandez 6-1, 6-1
in the Indian Wells semifinals,
Fernandez revealed: "We used to be
pals, but because of a minor
disagreement we are no
longer...that's what the tour does to
you...it's a tough world."

WORST SEX

DISCRIMINATION—As usual, the French Open relegated all four women's quarterfinal matches to Court Suzanne Lenglen—instead of Court Central—despite the fact that seven of the eight women players were seeded, including the top three. "I think we have the right to play on center court, too," protested Martina Hingis.

BEST

CAMARADERIE—U.S.Open champion Patrick Rafter paid homage to the Australian champions of yesteryear which are idols for a lot of us, "I have idols for a lot of us," They were like gods with growing up. Then which them, it's great to see they're just like regular guys. It's great to have the Aussie guys in your corner. Rochey will give me a call, just to talk about things and help me along if I'm going through a rough patch."

BEST HINGIS

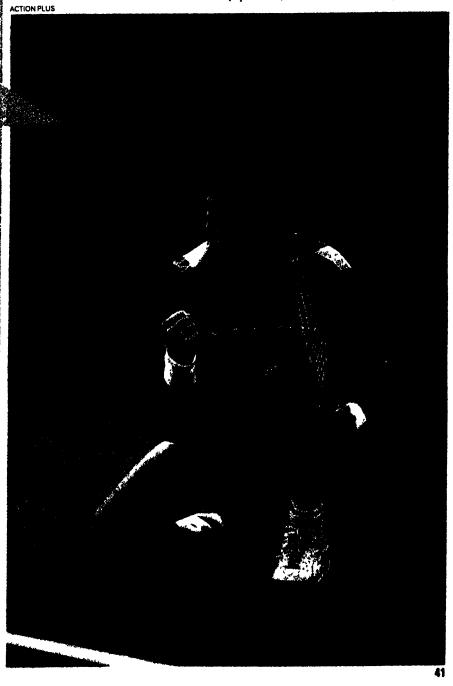
CONFIDENTIAL—"I don't want to become like Steffi or some of the other players. They just go on the court, play their game and go away. They always stay in their room. It isn't so bad if you can say hello and talk to somebody," said Martina Hingis, who socialises with players and fans more than any recent champion.

BEST STATE OF THE MEN'S GAME ANALYSIS—Reacting to Boris Becker's unexpected decision to retire during Wimbledon, Pete Sampras said, "It's a huge impact. The game needs some personality, and it needs a rivalry." Ironically, Sampras' uncharismatic personality and his domination of the men's game (except on clay) contributed to both problems.

WORST SEXIST MEDIA
COVERAGE—British sports
minister Tony Banks condemned as

"sexist" the British tabloid press, which focused heavily on the bodies and clothing of 16-year-olds Martina Hingis and Anna Kournikova and also ran unflattering photos of Monica Seles, with close-ups of her thighs. "It is appalling the way so much of women's tennis is treated like soft porn," Banks said. He urged the media to "concentrate more on women tennis players' abilities rather than their underwear and figures."

BEST TRIBUTE TO
BECKER—Boris Becker's
announcement during Wimbledon
that he was retiring from
competition at Grand Slam events
was front-page news across
Germany. Under the headline,
"We'll miss Boris," a Berlin tabloid,
BZ, said it would take a long time for
Germans to grasp that there can
even be tennis without him. The
newspaper wrote: "Becker was the
heart of our tennis. Boris was
passion, excitement, fascination."





DEST QUESTION—
Openly Navratilova has always en out about issues the derivation of the Navratilova has a raise for her

Navratilova has paid a price for her controversial comments. Therefore, she poses this burning question: "Each athlete must ask himself or herself. What's more important, endorsements, or being true to your beliefs?"

BEST WARNING FROM
SAMPRAS—"The thing that
concerns me is after we're done,"
Pete Sampras said after winning his
fourth Wimbledon and 10th Grand
Slam singles title. "There's really not
another young American coming up
right now. So I think the Americans
are really going to have to enjoy
what they have right now, because I
really don't see anyone coming up
who's going to do what Andre and
Michael and I have done."

BEST VENUS

Ť.

SUPPORTER—Defending 17-year-old Venus Williams against charges of arrogance, all-time great Billie Jean King says: "Oh, she's yo'ung. She hasn't been around yet. She'll calm down. But I like the way she says she expects to win. Venus has self-esteem, and isn't that what we've worked so hard for years in women's sports? Venus is awesome, that's all. Awesome. She reminds me of Althea Gibson—tall, black, fast, powerful, ambitious, confident. Venus will be the Althea Gibson of the 21st century."

WORST ANDRE-BROOKE

NEWS—According to the Sept. 30, 1997 Evening Standard (U.K.), newly weds Andre Agassi and Brooke Shields are having "teething troubles" because he wants to live in his old hometown of Las Vegas, but she prefers Hollywood. "She smiles and has no idea what she is requesting me to do," said Agassi. "I just look at her and think 'I would rather live with that smile than my bachelor pad."

BEST MAC

ATTACK—Embarrassed by American tennis' faltering TV ratings, John McEnroe said, "Maybe I take it too personally. But it almost makes me feel like I should go on TV in other sports where there's some excitement...There's a malaise where it appears people aren't playing hard. It's not good for any sport when players appear to be tanking." He added that Pete Sampras and Michael Chang "are never going to be big personalities even if you punch them in the head 100 times."

BEST HUNK—Surprise Australian Open finalist Carlos Moya, a handsome, muscular 6'3" Spanish heartthrob, captivated fans, especially females, Down Under with his great looks and smiling, sporting demeanor.

BEST VENUS WILLIAMS
CONFIDENTAL—"People talk
about all this pressure on young

tennis players, but the only thing stressing me out right now is all these chemistry formulas I've got to learn," confides 17-year black prodigy Venus Williams. "I would say, basically, I'm a laugher. I like to have fun. Sometimes, when I think about this whole thing, it just makes me burst out laughing"

BEST

SPORTSMANSHIP—Unseeded Patrick Rafter was one point away from levelling the match against Russian Andrei Cherkasov at the Australian Hardcourt Championships when he overruled the officials by telling them that his shot had landed outside the court. Down 13-14 in the second set tie-breaker, instead of being ahead 14-13, Rafter lost the next point to bow 6-2, 7-6. "Very few guys would do what he did," Cherkasov said of Rafter's gesture of honesty.

BEST DAVIS CUP

ATTITUDE—Chiding the American players for not always playing Davis Cup, the U.S.Open champion Patrick Rafter, of Australia, commented: "We have a proud tradition. Whenever I get a call to represent my country, I'm there. It's a shame the other guys don't feel the same way. There's nothing better than winning for your country."

BEST (?) LONG-TERM
INVESTMENT—In the hope that
one-year-old Queenslander Thomas
Fancutt may some day become the
savior of Australian tennis, Head has
agreed to supply Thomas with
rackets, shoes and bags until he
reaches No 1 in the world Young
Thomas has the bloodliness to prove
the skeptics wrong in 20 years His
father Chris, grandparents Daphne
and Trevor, and uncles Michael and
Charlie were all world-class tennis
players

BEST BALL

CONTROVERSY—After losing to Carlos Moya in the first round of the Australian Open Boris Becker was complained. Why does want to slow the game down the spectators don thave a problem with it. It is just a few guys with and a table who think the game is too fast, and then they change it. Now you have many guys with elbow problems, with wrist problems including myself, and in my opinion it's due to the fact they really soften up the balls."

BEST ACCUSATION OF

TANKING—Asked if today's young players are getting too much money too soon, Jimmy Connors said "I think the big money hurts their hunger to play I don't think they have the drive and the ambition to play 110 per cent in every match—they know that whether they win or lose, the paycheck is still there Big money encourages tanking In my opinion, tanking is going on even with a lot of the top guys today—it's quite evident "

BEST LOVE POTION—France's Sandrine Testud attributes her improvement in fitness and results in 1997 to "love" she found with her new Italian coach, Vittorio Magnelli Testud cracked the top 20 and upset Monica Seles at Wimbledon and French Open champion Iva Majoli at the U S.Open



BEST DENISE CAPRIATI

CONFESSION—"The excitement the endorsements, the money, the prestige, the pride. There it all is, and you get caught up in it, and you're not thinking of what your child is missing, and if this is what's best for them, 'admits Denise Capitali, Jennifer's mother.' I believe in my heart that she did love tennis, and still does, but I beat myself up later for not stopping things from getting so out of hand back then."

BEST TETE-A-TETE—When U S Open security guard Naomi Chambers demanded "Can I see your ID?" and again called out "Your ID," Pete Sampras replied, 'I am the ID" After being assured that Sampras, who wasn't wearing his player's badge, was OK, Chambers let him in When told Sampras was the best player in the world, she snapped "As far as I'm concerned, the best player is dead Arthur Ashe"

BEST CHARITY EVENT—Andre Agassı's star-studded extravaganza—featuring entertainers Elton John, Clmt Black Celine Dion, Lionel Richie and Jay Leno—raised \$ 42 7 million for at-risk Las Vegas children "You can literally feel it changing the city," says Agassi "We're creating a. culture that cares, that appreciates, that looks out for one another"

BEST DOUBLES TEAM
(WOMEN)—American Gigi
Fernandez and Natasha Zvereva of
Belarus won their fourth
Wimbledon title and their 14th
Grand Slam title as a team They are
the second most successful team in
the Open Era after Martina
Navratilova and Pam Shriver

BEST "WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN THAT LATELY?"—Charlie Pasarell the 1960s American standout, told *Inside Tennis* about the time Arthur Ashe and he played a clay court tournament in Southampton, England "Arthur and I played there, and they paid our expenses and an appearance fee of \$ 4200-4300 We both lost in the first round of the singles and doubles We were so embarrassed, we played so

badly, that we retured the money

BEST STORY ABOUT BORIS' BALLS—This offbeat story happened during the 1994 Wimbledon, but it s still funny At the end of every day, used tennis balls are sold to the public, and even the Duchess of Kent has purchased them After Boris Becker's first-round match, a middle-aged lady, not quite sure of the form, asked, with somewhat unlovely ambiguity 'Where can I bid for

Bons Becker's balls?"

BEST ANALYSIS OF
CHARISMA—Why did Tiger
Woods' Masters golf win on CBS
draw a 14 1 TV rating, while Pete
Sampras' Wimbledon triumph on
NBC drew a 3 4 the
second-lowest-rated Wimbledon
men's final? "To tennis fans,
Sampras is a superstar, but
hard-core fans get you a 2 rating
You have to go beyond the junkies,"
explains Grey Advertising's Jon
Mandel Stressing Sampras' lack of

charisma, media buyer Paul Schulman says, "It's a sad thing tha he's a player just saying love me for what I do on the court"

BEST RUSSIAN

PERSPECTIVE—The Spartak
Olympic Sports School in Moscow i
aggrieved at media reports that
glamorous teenage prodigy and
Wimbledon semifinalist Anna
Kournikova owes her success to
coaching at the Nick Bollettieri
Tennis Andemy for the past five
year and the credit's going to that
belleties said director Natalya
Kochetkova' But she spends most
and the Spartak coach
kosa Mukhamedzhanova added,
'We'll produce a lot more
Kournikovas in the future''

BEST PRESS COVERAGE—After Marcelo Filippini, Uruguay's top tennis player for the past decade, won the AT&T Challenge in Atlanta in May, El Observador a leading newspaper in Uruguay devoted the first three pages of its sports section to Filippini. The day after Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten shocked everyone by winning the French Open. O Estado de Sao Paulo carried. 15 newspaper stories about him.

BEST USTA DECISION—Protests forced the United States Tennis Association to reconsider its initial decision to name the new 23,000-seat stadium at Flushing Meadow the USTA Stadium Instead the USTA wisely and unanimously decided to name it the Arthur Ashe Stadium after one of the game's most beloved ambassadors and great humanitarians

BEST ANALYSIS OF INDIA'S PROBLEMS—Former world No 3, Wimbledon semifinalist and Davis Cup captain Ramanathan Krishnan analysed India's tennis woes "In our country, there is no system The priorities of our administrators is to hang onto power by hook or by crook The corporate sector is willing



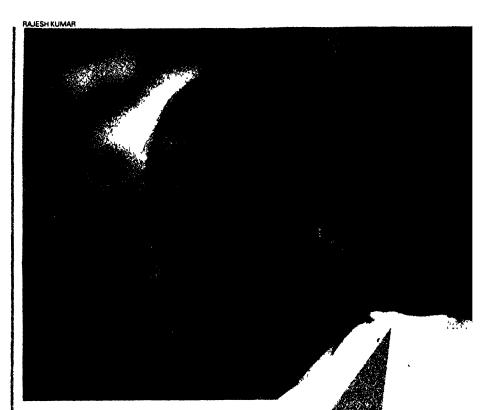
to invest more and more in Indian sport, but our officials are wary of the big houses, thinking that they may come in and start calling the shots. No thought, no planning goes into any project and, consequently, there is no meaningful development program at any level."

BEST OBSERVATION ABOUT AGASSI—"It's a shame how his talent has been squandered," said Jimmy Connors. "I cannot understand how a person can be number one in the world and then let himself go. Brad (Gilbert, Agassi's coach) must be frustrated to see Andre's decline. This is a catastrophe."

BEST HINGIS GESTURE—At the Wimbledon champions banquet, Martina Hingis displayed humility rare for her. When the Wimbledon boy's champion Wesley Whitehouse asked her to pose for a photograph and sign an autograph for his sister, Hingis replied: "You are a champion, too, will you sign for me!" No wonder the South African wants to date her.

BEST(?)BEAUTY CRITIQUE—During the U.S. Open, the New York Post offered this critique of Martina Hingis's looks: "Get rid of those bangs. Either cut them shorter or let them grow. Besides getting in her eyes, they look babyish and give her a bowl hairdo. She's got beautiful porcelain skin so we suggest she wear bright colours; those washed-out colours and all tennis whites don't do her any glamour justice."

BEST BATTLE-OF-THE SEXES
QUESTION— When world No.1
Martina Hingis was asked if she
could hang in there against the likes
of Thomas Muster and Michael
Chang, she replied: "They would kill
me. They play with so much power. I
would rather play someone like
Boris Becker. Someone who likes to
have short rallies. But he would
have to have one serve."



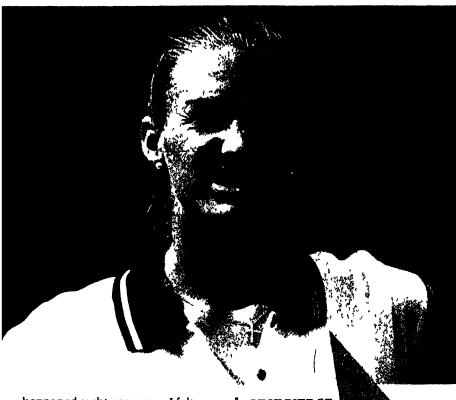
BEST TENNIS MOTHER
COMMENT—On today's
sex-obsessed world, Oracene
Williams, a former history teacher,
told The Daily Telegraph's Sue Mott:
"Venus has escaped a lot of that stuff
because she's not loose out there. I
think a lot of things that go on are
very demeaning for the woman.
When it comes to that, I'm a
rampant feminist. Every time a
photographer takes a picture, it's
always the behind. Or the bust. I
hate seeing that. I don't want my
girls to be part of that."

BEST HINGIS PARTING SHOT—Bristling at the notion that her ascent to No.1 is due to Steffi Graf's absence, Martina Hingis said: "I don't want to hear from everybody that you are only No.1 because she is not playing. I won three Grand Slams. You cannot have anything (in reply) against that."

BEST HOT PICKS FOR 1998— Keep an eye on Serena Williams, Tommy Haas, Nathalie Dechy, Julian Alonso, Katarina Srebotnik, Lleyton Hewitt and Katrina Nimmers. BEST QUICK
ARTIST—A arcclo Rios
had been Adidas for
seven y dictable
Chilean sw ke in the
middle of Wine He wore Nike
attire for the first to
Becker but still lost in straight sets.

WORST NO SHOWS—Although 37 past winners of the U.S. Championships arrived from all over the globe to celebrate the opening night dedication ceremony of the new Arthur Ashe Stadium on August 25, four Americans were conspicuously and disrespectfully absent. They were former champions Jimmy Connors, Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi as well as New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

BEST EMOTIONAL TRIUMPH— Eight years after an accident caused by a drunken driver severely injured Thomas Muster's left knee just before his Lipton final and almost ended his career, the ultimate warrior withstood 106-degree heat to crush Sergi Bruguera 7-6, 6-3, 6-1 to capture his first Lipton Championship. "After what



happened eight years ago, I felt today was a great day of justice for me," Muster told the crowd

WORST GERMAN TV

STATISTIC—Germany is witnessing the end of the explosion in tennis popularity. In 1984, the year before Boris Becker captured his first Wimbledon crown, German TV offered 13 total hours of live tennis. In 1992 Germany boasted a whopping 2,739 hours. But in 1997 the total dropped to 1,658 hours.

BEST RAFTER

CONFIDENTIAL—Ecstatic but self-effacing in his press conference after winning the U.S. Open, Patrick Rafter said, "I don't want to change from this experience. It's been a great experience, but if I fall to No.50 in the world, I'm happy. It's a lot better than being No.1 and being a pain in the arse."

BEST SAMPRAS REVELATION—

"I never have any close friends my own age," reveals Pete Sampras. "I kn writ's not normal, but it's just the w y ham." BEST PIERCE
CONFIDENTIA
Australian Open
admits. "I'can be
enemy and my be
usually I'm my worst enemy. I rarely
think of my good qualities. I have to
stop myself sometimes and look at
what I've accomplished in my life

and tennis."

WORST DISRESPECT—Offended by being placed on a remote outside court for her first-round match at the Direct Line Championship at Eastbourne, an irate Iva Majoli questioned journalists: "Who won the French Open? . Even if my dog had won the French Open, he'd have deserved to be on the stadium court." Monica Seles and Jana Novotna, the top two seeds, and intriguing black prodigy Venus Williams played on the stadium court instead.

BEST BLAST FROM THE PAST

I—Today's players do not understand how matches are won, according to 1942 U.S. champion and 1949 Wimbledon champion Ted Schroeder. "Watch the Couriers and the Agassis. They'll go out and hit every ball just as hard as they possibly can. They make enough good shots in one rally to win a set and wind up losing the point. And then they don't understand why they lose. The gurus of the present, the (Nick) Bollettieris and people like that, don't know their you-know-what from their elbow about how to win matches," charged Schroeder.

BEST BLAST FROM THE PAST

II—Budge Patty, who won the French and Wimbledon championships in 1950, is displeased with the modern game. "It is so easy to play with the new rackets; all you need is a flick of the wrist. Don't misunderstand me. I've got one, too, but it's just like Ping-Pong. Something is wrong when you hit the ball as hard as you can for 10 shots in a row and every one goes in. And everybody plays the same style."

BEST COURIER

REPARTEE—During an Australian Open press conference, former world No.1 Jim Courier jousted with a journalist:

- Q Jim, do you have a ranking goal in mind for the year ahead?
- A No, not that I care to share with you.
- Q Perhaps if we were better friends? A - I don't think that is going to happen.

BEST AGASSI QUOTE—"I enjoy tennis when I'm intense about it. I enjoy my life when it's intense. And you can't have both, "said Andre Agassi.

BEST CASE FOR THE DAVIS

CUP—"When they write the history books, it's the Grand Slam titles and Davis Cup championships you've won that define your career," says Tom Gullikson, captain of the U.S Davis Cup team. "But I don't think players of today see it as a priority any more. At least, I know some of ours don't... You know, you

don't need to be a sophisticated tennis fan to appreciate the drama of Davis Cup. All you have to know is which country you're from. But mention Davis Cup in the United States, and most people haven't got a clue."

BEST CHARISMA CONTRAST—

"In Pete Sampras you have elegance and genius," says Chris Evert. "But you don't have fire and you need that. In those three women (Martina Hingis, Anna Kournikova and Venus Williams) I see a lot of potential and a lot of fire. They're all brash, completely up front, saying things that past champions would only think about saying."

BEST MAC ATTACK— John McEnroe described today's men's players as "a boring bunch of clones They don't realise just how boring they are, and with the huge amounts of money they are earning, I think that is a problem...With young players like Venus Williams, Martina Hingis and Anna Kournikova coming along, they (the women's tour) definitely have more appeal."

WORST TEMPTING OF FATE—Martina Hingis's favourite hobby is riding her two horses, and in 1997 she even started entering horse show jumping competitions. Hingis fell off a horse during the Australian Open and again in April. The latter accident injured her left knee which required arthroscopic surgery and forced a five-week layoff. The mishaps bring back memories of the tragic horseback riding accident in 1954 that prematurely ended the career of teen queen Maureen Connolly.

WORST IRRELEVANT
STATISTIC—Second-seeded
Goran Ivanisevic set a new record for
the most aces (46) served in a
Wimbledon match. So what! He still
lost his first-round match
6-3,2-6,7-6,4-6,14-12 to Sweden's
Magnus Norman.



WORST ES TROU fter Todd Woo Mark Woodforde, doubles team, were th Open first round, cated the Woodie y be in trouble. "I partnership and my trainer and Todd's wife Natasha are all waiting for him to grow up a little and not show his emotions," said Woodforde. "I'm disappointed that he swears at umpires and throws his racket."

WORST POWER TENNIS STATISTIC—The total length of time that the ball was actually in play in the 113-minute Wimbledon match between rocket servers Greg Rusedski and Mark Philippoussis was a mere 8 minutes.

BEST SAMPRAS

SELF-PORTRAIT—"I know I'm not David Letterman when it comes to interviews. But the way I am on the court is the way I've been my whole life and the way I will continue to be, a lot like (Bjorn) Borg was," said Pete Sampras about his reserved personality.

BEST AGASSI IRONY—After playing only twice in his first 12 years on the tour at the Australian Open—where the tournament surface ideally suits his game—Andre Agassi, now ranked a lowly No.139, asked for and received a wild card to compete there in 1998.

BEST TRIBUTE TO GULLY I—On April 21 about 200 people lined the sidewalk and street in Onalaska, Wisconsin, for a dedication ceremony in honour of Tim Gullikson, the late standout coach and player. A 4-by-8-foot black granite monument was dedicated to the hometown hero.

BEST TRIBUTE TO GULLY II—
The men's locker room at the Lipton
Championships was formally
dedicated to Tim Gullikson, the
coach of Pete Sampras and popular
tour player who died in 1996.
Inscribed on the plaque now
hanging there: "To Tim, who treated
a locker room as his living room on
the road—a place to meet and greet
friends, offer moral support to, and
enjoy the camaraderie of, his fellow

tennis players."

THE GAME HAS BECOME FASTER'

Says T.SHANMUGHAM, a former Olympian who has just retired as the widely respected Technical Director of the Salgaocar football club

THE 77 year-old former Olympian footballer T Shanmugham who served as the Salgaocar coach for 14 years between 1979 to 1993 retired last month as its technical director Under this Bangalore based Helsinki Olympian Salgaocar won two successive Federation Cups beating Border Security Force in 1988 and defeating Mohammedan Sporting the following year

Recently when Salgaocar defeated Fast Bengal for the Kalyani Black I abel Federation (up Shanmugham could not be there in Calcutta He had to watch the action on television thanks to a forced rest following an accident in Hyderabad

Here are excerpts from the interview

Please compare the old with the present. How have things changed? Have they changed for the better?

There s change no doubt The game has become much more faster. In the sense, those days players were allowed to hold the ball and dribble it for far more time than which is allowed now. Today, a player is forced to release the ball soon. In India also, the professional league introduced from las season will definitely bring.



in some more changes within the next few years. We re bound to progress from where we re now

Why is India always lagging behind on the world scene?

All over the world the governments have taken a lot of interest in promoting football The governments' involvement is enormous, in providing all sorts of encouragement. But in India it is only the All India Football Federation which is looking after the game. It needs lots of funds. The government's help is needed in building the infrastructure Fncouragement should also be given right from the school level But nowadays, even grounds are not available to play There used to be so many grounds all over I feel every school should have a ground of its own

Is our physical characteristics the main reason why we don't do well or is it mental or perhaps our lack of exposure?

Football is a game where the body co-ordinates with the mind. A player



should be physically fit and have the mental make-up for today's football. The players should also have the spirit. They should have that desire to play football and come up. Of course, compared to the Europeans physique, we are certainly lacking. The Europeans are also so conditioned that they can do anything in a split second. This needs top fitness.

Is there too much of politics in Indian football?

I don't want to comment about it. But

KBL Federation Cup champions Salgaccar with coach Chattuni (in red) at the Salt Lake stadium. Earlier, under Shanmugham (left) the Goan team won the tournament twice

I think players with high standards who donned India colours should be chosen to improve the football standards in the country. They should be involved in the game's administration or selection etc.

Is it true that the centre of football has moved from Calcutta to Kochi?

No, I don't think so. I can say, Goa is coming up both in the standard of the game and the organisation. But though Calcutta players are moving out of there, still the City of Joy retains that spirit that's attached with the game.

PABITRA DAS



You've just now retired after a long coaching stint in Goa.

Yes. I really enjoyed my 15 long years in Goa. I was given a lot of freedom, good facilities and encouragement by Salgaocar since the time I joined them. I did my best to bring up the club team. Football in Goa is a tradition now. Every school or college has its own football team and ground there. And these institutions are managed by the football-loving people. That's vital.

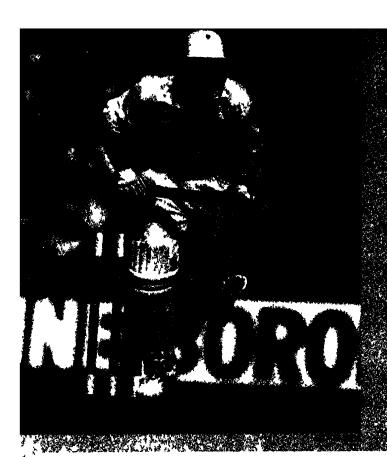
Is there any change in modern-day football coaching? Tell us about the coaching methods you have adopted?

I was sent by the Government of Mysore to Patiala when the Netaji **Subhas National Institute of Sports**

started there in 1961. I underwent training under a British coach named Harry Wright. You know, watering the ground and then playing was common in English football. Because of the heaviness, dribbling could not be possible. So long passes were the order of the day. But nowadays, good dribbling, shooting and a lot of other skills in coaching methods have curtailed possession football.

I used to make the team play and watch the players' deficiencies before correcting them. Whether they were able to control the ball, pass and shoot and win the ball from the opponent. Of course, discipline was my first lesson to the youngsters.

Interviewed by Aishwarya Lakshmi





M	INNS	NO	RUNS	AVGE	HS	100's	50'\$
265	245	46	7383	37.10	111*	4	45

Against each country

Opponents	M	INNS	NO	RUNS	AVGE	HS	100's	50's
England	22	21	8	811	62 38	95*	0	7
Australia	35	33	6	778	28.81	94	0	4
West Indies	42	41	4	997	26. 94	81	Q	2
New Zealand	30	30	7	827	35 95	108*	1	4
Pakistan	48	43	6	1124	30.37	93*	0	6
Sri Lanka	42	38	9	1576	54 34	111*	3	13
Zimbabwe	14	11	3	236	29 50	54*	0	1
South Africa	26	26	2	930	38.75	90	0	7
Bangladesh	4	1	1	23	*****	23*	0	Ö
UAE	ì	ī	Ő	81	81.00	81	0	1
Kenya	ī	Õ	Ó	0	0.00	0	0	0
	265	245	46	7383	37.10		4	45

Top Five In One Day Cricket

		M	INNS	NO	RUNS	AVGE	HS	100's	50's
Desmond Haynes	WI	238	237	28	8648	41.37	152*	17	57
Mohd Azharuddin	India	265	245	46	7383	37.10	111*	4	45
Javed Miandad	Pak	233	218	41	7381	41.70	119*	8	5 Ö
Aravında De Sılva	Srilanka	222	216	23	7019-	36.36	145	10	46
Şəlim Malık	Pak	268	242	37	6884	33,58	103	۶.	46

UP DATED THE 16.12.1307

Compiled by Hari Prasad Chattopdhyay

READERS' UIZ

QUESTIONS

The Lord's cricket club has always been famous. However, India was associated with two infamous incidents during the '70's at Lord's.

What are they?

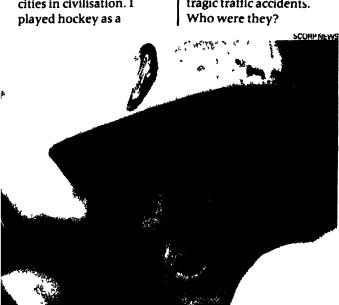
2. My first name is one of the most important cities in civilisation. I played hockey as a

for the 'Banana Kick' or the 'Flag Kick'?

Majid Baskar and
Jamshed Nassiri
played for two of the three
super clubs in Calcutta, but
both did not play for one
club. Which club was this?

The '85 Calcutta
football league match
between Mohd. Sporting
and East Bengal remains a
black day in Indian
football. Why?

Two very famous
Indian hockey
players lost their lives in
tragic traffic accidents.
Who were they?



goalkeeper and represented India in the Los Angeles Olympics. Who am I?

1 am also a former hockey Olympian but now I am engaged in running my petrol pump in Delhi called Gentre-Half.'
Who am I?

If Shyam Thapa was famous for his 'Bicycle kick' or 'Back Volley', who was famous

Answer to Question No.11

This institution is named after a Roman governor and is associated with the sport of boxing. Many Championship bouts were held here. Which institution are we talking about?

In the '70's the crowd
at Calcutta during a
Test match held up banners
proclaiming 'No Gopal, no
Test,' because an Indian



Answer to Question No.10

player was dropped. Who was he?

10 One famous former Indian tennis player once wore a T-shirt which proclaimed, "Love thy neighbour, but don't get caught." Who, was he?

Years back, a former cricket legend remarked, "Never refuse a kid an autograph, because he might have an elder sister." Name the cricketer.

ANSWERS

- 1. India got all out for a humiliating score of 42, and opener Sudhir Naik was caught for shoplifting.
- 2. Rome James.
- 3. Ajitpal Singh.
- 4. Surajit Sengupta.
- 5. Mohun Bagan.
- **6.** Cheema Okerie scored in barely 60 seconds, East Bengal equalised later, but the match was abandoned due to crowd violence.
- 7. Leslie Claudius (Jr) and Surjit Singh.
- 8. Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.
- 9. Gopal Bose.
- 10. Vijay Amritraj.
- 11. Jeff Thompson.

THIS QUIZ HAS BEEN COMPILED BY

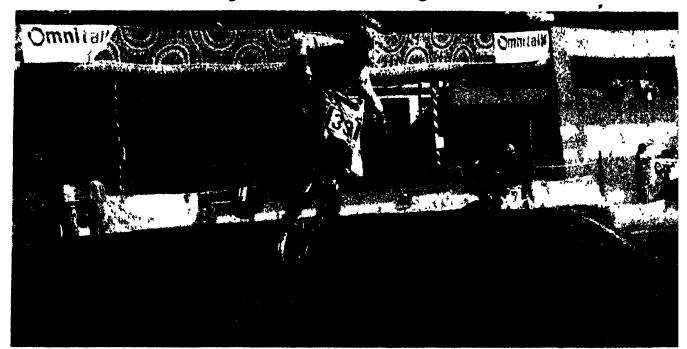


RUDOLPH VANCE, C/O MR. B.P. GUPTA, FLAT 2A, KAILASH BUILDING, CHOWRINGHEE CALCUTTA WEST BENGAL PIN --- 700 016

All answers are sent in by the contributor.
Readers are requested to sent in at least 20 questions and answers accompanied by a passport size colour photograph with their quiz.

RIDING HARD

Two international motorcross events sponsored by the MRF Limited was held in Bangalore and Pune with great success



HE history of Indian motorsport, (specially motorcross) touched one more milestone in December 1997. Two international motorcross events (conducted on one week-end after the other) at Pune and Bangalore, did organisers Shyam Kothari and Sheriff Dyan proud, and MRF Limited happy.

"We are extremely happy with the results," said Antony Rodricks, MRF's Corporate Advertising chief.

Pune and Bangalore witnessed some of the finest European, Asian and Indian dare-devils taking part in these events. Keeping in mind the Sunday holiday which every single individual does not wish to sacrifice, the Saturday events drew one of the highest gate collections in the sport.

MRF, whose involvement in Indian motorsport sponsorship dates back at le 1st 30 years, got their money's worth as they painted Pune and Bengalore red.

Oscar Vromans of Holland navigates an obstacle in the Pune Motocross. He later won in the International Foreign Bikes category upto 250cc

Considering the lower cost of running a Motorcross event, compared to a rally or circuit race, MRF Limited used the organising ability of their long-time sponsored rider Shyam Kothari and veteran racer Sheriff Dyan.

Shyam who is the only Indian to have won the National Champion crown in Racing, Rallying & Motorcross, says, "Motorcross helps one to keep fit and trim. It is a combination of rallying and circuit racing. The only difference is the tyres and the bikes."

Putting aside the conventional 'No Cheergirls, No Gimmicks' principle of MRF Tyres Ltd., the hyped up events had their share of dance, music and superstars to woo the crowds. Jackie Shroff and choreographer Shiamak Davar graced the BJ Medical College

grounds at Pune, while Manisha Koirala, who had committed to come but had to finally give the event a miss because of her shooting schedule in South Africa.

Shiamak Davar and his troupe of girls performed during the gap between race to race, and kept the crowd entertained, at Pune.
Bangalore chose a more conventional method of employing 'cheergirls' (read school girls) to keep the spectators busy. Much was left to be desired in the quality of models (?), both at Pune and Bangalore.

Among the 25 competitors who rode the International class foreign Bikes 250cc were Holland's Rudy Versteeg (23 years), Oscar Vromans (22) and Marcel Hartman (25), Belgium. A 12-member strong Sri Lankan squad and two riders from Japan, along with five Indians, Ashok Raja, Jagatmeer Singh, Rohan Rego, Zubin Patel and Reverth Dhillon, formed the Asian challenge.

The new FIA (Federation International Automobile) rule added to the thrill. The new rule says in all the international Motorcross races, the riders are given a minimum time of 15 minutes to ride in a race, after which two laps around the track are permitted. This allows more room for testing endurance, pushing the riders to perform to their maximum ability.

While the riders from Denmark and Germany proved their superiority beyond doubt, the Indians also had their moments of glory. Ashok Raja from Pune astride a Suzuki RM-125, won the Asian Rider's race at Pune, with Japanese, Sri Lankan, and Malaysian riders pitted against him. Zubin Patel's performance in the Indian Classes was very good.

The performance of the foreigners including the Sri Lankans were better because of the number of opportunities available to practise and race, and the number of individual sponsors that they have.



Cheerleaders busy watching the action at the Motorcross event held at Bangalore

MRF Limited has got into the right slot in organising these International Motorcross events, giving an

opportunity to the toreign rider to race in India, and the Indian riders an opportunity to hone his skills against better riders and better machines.

Text and photographs George Francis/Scorp News

Kyokushin KARATE News

Kyokushin Karate - Original form of full contact Karate invented by Grand Master Sosai Mas. Oyama having branches in over 130 countries and 12 million followers with its World H Q at Tokyo, Japan and its Asian / Indian H.Q. at Harish Park, Bhowanipur, Calcutta 700 025, India.



Shihan Shivaji Ganguly - Exponent of Kyokushin Karate for the last 20 years, trained many times under Sosai Mas Oyama at Japan and achieved 5th Degree Black Belt Shihan Ganguly is presently the Asian Chairman & Board Member of IKO. For his tremendous effort in uplifting and establishing Kyokushin in India, on behalf of Kyokushin Karate Orgn., India it is our proud priviledge to pay our tribute to this great Kyokushin Master.

Kyokushin Karate Organisation, India - will organise an International Kyokushin Karate Seminar



Indian Karate Team for Kyokushin Cup to be held at Colombo, Sri Lanka
Top L to R: K. Ghosh (Coach), S. Mondal, M. Modak, K. Satish, D. Bhar
Bottom L to R: M. Awasthi, S. Vishwakarma, S. Purakayastha, Master
Shibayan Ganguly (Demo) & Shivaji Ganguly (Chairman Asia)

cum Camp in March 1998, which is the first time in Asia region. Moreover Indian team will participate in different events in 1998 such as "Kyokushin Cup" International Tournament at Sri Lanka on 10th January 1998, International Tournament at Japan in March 1998 & Mini World Cup at USA in May 1998 and many other events.

Affiliation Any Martial Artist (with good Martial Arts background) / Clab can join us. Write with Biodata to:

GIANT-KILLI FEATS EXPE

With a levelling of standards all over the world, a pulsating World Cup Finals is expected. Still, Brazil start as hot favourites

FROM NOVY KAPADIA. **NEW DELHI**

T was a long and winding road for the thirty qualifiers for France '98. Remember holders Brazil and hosts France made it to the final rounds without playing the gruelling qualifying stages. The longer established football-playing continents Europe and South America have many exciting teams in the fray.

However, there is a rapid levelling of standards as the comparatively "newer continents" of Africa and Asia with an improved professional set-up and greater exposure to their star players have shrugged aside the inferiority complexes of yore and shown they can compete with the best in the world.

Giant-killing feats can be expected from South Korea, Japan, Iran, Tunisia, South Africa, Morocco, newcomers Jamaica and Cameroon (remember the shock 1-0 win over erstwhile World Cup champions Argentina in the opening match of Italia 90).

So a pulsating, throbbing and thrilling final rounds is on the cards. Large parts of the world will come to a standstill when the Final takes place.

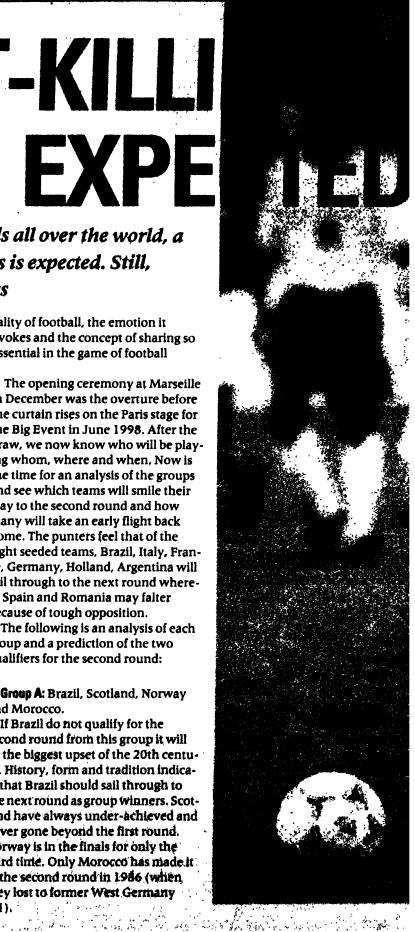
To mark the occasion of the last World Cup of the 20th century, Paris will organise a "Football Festival" on June 9, 1998. The opening ceremony vill focus on three themes: the universality of football, the emotion it evokes and the concept of sharing so essential in the game of football

The opening ceremony at Marseille in December was the overture before the curtain rises on the Paris stage for the Big Event in June 1998. After the draw, we now know who will be playing whom, where and when, Now is the time for an analysis of the groups and see which teams will smile their way to the second round and how many will take an early flight back home. The punters feel that of the eight seeded teams, Brazil, Italy, France, Germany, Holland, Argentina will sail through to the next round whereas Spain and Romania may falter because of tough opposition.

The following is an analysis of each group and a prediction of the two qualifiers for the second round:

Group A: Brazil, Scotland, Norway and Morocco.

If Brazil do not qualify for the second round from this group it will be the biggest upset of the 20th century. History, form and tradition indicate that Brazil should sail through to the next round as group winners. Scotland have always under-achieved and never gone beyond the first round. Norway is in the finals for only the third time. Only Morocco has made it to the second round in 1986 (when they lost to former West Germany 0-1).





Renaldo duels with Mariean captain Claudia Suspez deving the PIFA Confederation Cup match bold at Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. Brazil will rely enormously an Renaldo's noal-ocoring provens during the World Cup

Brazil with Ronaldo, Romario (still going strong at the age of 32). Bebeto, Edmundo amd Savio have their most lethal forward line since the super team of the 1970s, the era of Pele, Tostao, Jairzinho and Rivelino. In the midfield, Leonardo, Juninho and the precocious 19-year-old Denilson along with free-kick expert Roberto Carlos are formidable. Coach Mario Zagallo's major problem is who to leave out, such is the depth of talent in the Brazilian team at present.

Considering that Norway is the only team to have beaten Brazil (4-2 in May '97), this rugged team coached by former Marxist journalist Egil Olsen should be the second qualifer from this group.

Qualifiers from Group A: Brazil and Norway.

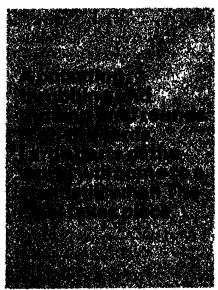
Group B: Italy, Chile, Cameroon and Austria.

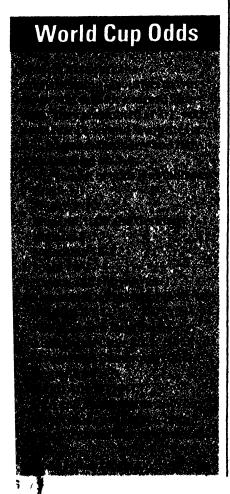
Experts feel that Italy is sliding due to the excessive number of foreign stars in Serie A. Their national coach Cesar Maldini is perturbed that the young Italian forwards are not getting enough chances as rich clubs opt for foreign strikers. In their last fifty matches, Italy has won just 29, lost 10 and drawn 11. This is in contrast to Brazil who have won 41, drawn six and lost just thrice.

However, Italy is in the weakest group of them all. Cameroon is only a pale shadow of the team which enthralled the world in the 1990 World Cup. Chile is considered the weakest of the five South American qualifiers. However, they have feared strikers in the \$20 million rated Marcello Salas, expected to join Manchester United next season and with a playing style similar to Romatio or Jimmy Greaves and powerful Ivan Zamarano. Chile with their striking power could cause an upset or two.

Austria revived by coach Herbert Pronaska and reliant on veterans Andi Herzog and Tony Polster could be the second qualifier. In the last decade, Austria have not played against either Chile or Cameroon, so an unlikely second qualifer is possible. The punters have bracketed Chile and Austria at 8-1 to qualify with Cameroon marginally behind at 9-1.

Qualifiers from Group B. Italy and either Austria or Chile.





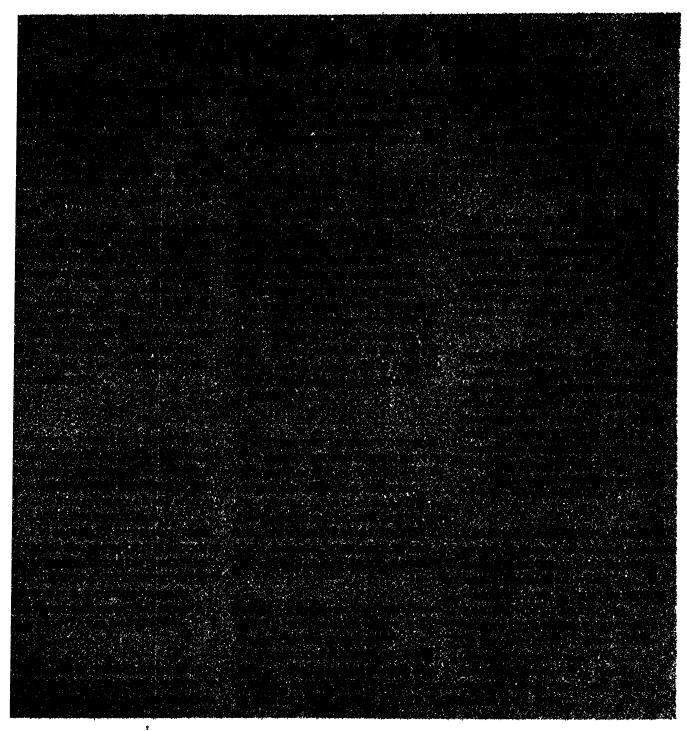
Group C: France, South Africa, Saudi Arabia and Denmark.

Hosts France with the home advantage and with its strongest side since the glory days of Platini, Giresse and Tigana should coast through to the second round. Their key players Youri Djorkaeff, Zinedine Zidane, Marcel Dessailly, Didier Deschamps and defender Luis Thuram are at their peak However, coach Aime Jacquet is under pressure to perform at the big stage (France was a big flop in Euro

Romania still banks heavily on the 'Meradona of the Carpathians' Gheorge Hagi, who excels with those visionary passes '96). There is also concern about the goal-scoring ability of strikers Ibrahim Ba and Christoffe Duggarry. Still, with the passionate crowd support, France should easily qualify for the next round.

Saudi Arabia, known as the Germany of Asia for their sheer consistency, lack the firepowesto trouble the fancied teams. Debutants South Africa are in a stage of transition with key midfielders John "Shoes" Mosheu and Eric Tinkler and the ageing striker Mark Williams They also sacked their 53-year-old coach Clive Bar-





ker who understood the psyche of his players well, being associated with them since 1994.

Thus Denmark with the classy
Laudrup brothers (Michael and
Brian) and one of the world's best goalkeepers Peter Schmeichel (of Manchester United Jame) in their miks
should enter the next round.

Qualifiers from Group C: France

and Denmark.

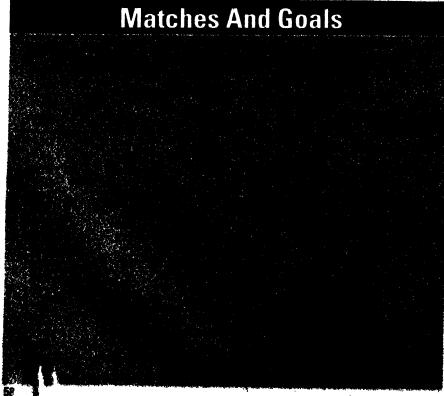
Group D: Spain, Nigeria, Paraguay and Bulgaria.

This could be the group of death in France '98. There are four really tough teams. Bulgaria, semi-finalists in 1994, can still be dangerous with the likes of Krassmir Belakov, Ivan Tifa-nov and Hristo Stolichkov still going

strong. The Bulgarian players have improved with regular exposure in leading European clubs

Nigeria, winners of the gold medal in a high-quality competition at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, are presently Africa's best bet to excel They combine speed, power, strength with technical skills and good combination. With players like Celestine Babyarao,





With Clarence Seedorf and Patrick Klubrert (right) in their ranks, Holland should sall into the second round

Turbo West and Daniel Ammokachi they will be difficult to beat.

Paraguay is unpredictable and have in Jose Luis Chivalert one of the best goalkeepers in the world.

Until now, the best achievements of Spain have been fourth at the 1950 World Cup, However, the national team under the able guidance of the "old fox" Javier Clemente is unbeaten since losing on penalties to England in the Euro '96 quarter-finals.

Spain has numerous all-round players like Guardiala, Alfanso, Abelardo, Kiko and Luis Enrique and some of the best defenders in Europe in Herrara, bustling left back Sergi and commanding sweeper back Miguel Angel Nadal. Many rate the talented attacking midfielder, Raul as the most exciting prospect in France 98 after Ronaldo and Denilson. With such

wealth of talent, sound temperament, big match experience and a well-knit combination, Spain is favoured to top this demanding group. In their last fifty matches, Spain has won 31, drawn 15 and lost just four. This shows they are a difficult team to beat.

Qualiflers from Group D: Spain and either Nigeria or Bulgaria.

Group & Holland, Belgium, South Korea and Mexico.

Holland and Belgium are obvious favourites to qualify South Korea in four previous World Cups have never made it past the first round. Mexico having sacked coach Bora Milutohivic traditionally do not fare well in the cold and wet climate of Europe. If Holland do not self-destruct (players squabble over money, racial problems and team selection) this talented team could be the surprise packet of the World Cup

With players like Denis Bergkamp, Marc Ovemars, Patrick Kluivert, Edgar Davids, Clarence Seerdorf, Danny Blind and Winston Bogart in their ranks they could win all their three group matches. If coach Guys Hiddink can maintain team spirit, Holland will be tough to beat. Holland lost to Belgium 0-1 in the 1994 World Cup at the USA and so Dutch pride should ensure they top this group.

Qualifiers from Group E: Holland and Belgium.

Group F. Germany, USA, Yugoslavia and Iran.

Not many talented players are emer ging in Germany but with their brilliant team spirit, brilliant combination and technical excellence, they will be formidable. Coach Bertis Vogts always says, "My team is my star," So though lurgen Kohler, Thomas Hassler, Andy vioeller and Jurgen Klimsmann are igeing, they still have the spirit to win his group. Dashing left back Christian liege, powerful front-runner Oliver lierhoff could be the stars. Germany ias lost just four out of their last 50 natches and won 35, so they date ever be underestimated.

Yuguslavikalso has many talented tars like striker Predrag Mijatovic of

Real Madrid and the brilliant playmaker Déjan Savicevic. The USA and Iran have well combined teams but lack the overall ability to check either Germany or the Yugoslavs. The Iran vs USA match on June 21 at Lyon could be the most politically explosive tie of the tournament.

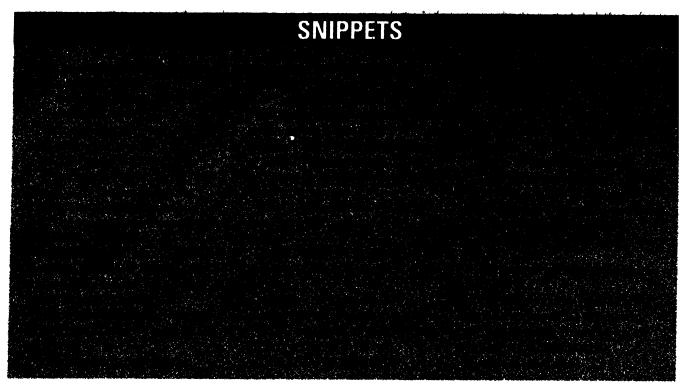
Iran which has four players, the maximum from any Asian country playing in the Bundesliga, could

England's attacking line depends on key siriker Alon Sheerer trouble Germany in particular. The four playing in Germany are striker Ali Daee, midfielders Khodad Aziz and Karim Bagheri and defender Mohammed Khakpour (who played in India for Bahman and Pas Club in 1994 and 1991, respectively) could enhance their reputation

Qualifiers from Group F: Germany and Yugoslavia.

Group 6: Romania, England, Columbia and Tunisia.





Romania had the best record in the World Cup qualifiers winning nine games and drawing one. They look as formidable as in 1994 when they

reached the last eight and only lost on penalties to Sweden. With the

Colombia cannot do without the services of the indispensible but ageing Carlos Valderrame

"Maradona of the Carpithians"
Gheorge Hagi sull excelling with those visionary passes, Romania will be a delight to watch and tough to beat.





England under Glen Hoddle have become a sophisticated, well-knit combination. In David Seaman they have an outstanding goalkeeper. The vision and passing ability of the Manchester United trio of David Beckham, Paul Scholes and Gary Neville is of the highest order. However, much will depend on the rapid return to form of key striker Alan Shearer recovering from an ankle operation and the temperamental genius Paul Gascoigne.

Columbia, Pele's favourites for the 1994 World Cup, were a big let down, racked by scandals and disputes. They will hope to revive their image and bank on lethal but moody striker Paustina Aspirilia, winger Freddy Rincon and skilful midfielder Carlos Valderramma.

Tunisia, runners-up in the 1996 African Nations Cup, are a talented team which likes playing possession football. There is little to choose but due to sheer crowd support, England are 9-4 favourites to top the group followed by Columbia on 9-2 and Romania on 20-1.

Bulgaria is a formidable team and with Hristo Stoichkey still in the ranks the apposition will have to sweet it out to contain him

Qualifiers from Group G: Romania and England.

Group H: Argentina, Croatia, Japan and Jamaica.

This was a group of remarkable coincidence. Argentina, a veteran of 12 World Cup appearances faces three first-time qualifiers Japan, Jamaica and Croatia. Argentina at 5-2 and Croatia, one of the most exciting, attacking teams in Europe at 9-4, are favoured to progress to the next round.

Argentina's Daniel Passarella fears Croatia which, on form, could trouble the best in the world with such talented strikers like Alen Boskic of Lazio club (Italy) and Davor Suker of Real Madrid and Barcelona's star midfielder Robert Prosinecki.

The Croatian coach Miroslav Blazivec is happy that his team is playing minnows Jamaica in their opening tie at Lens on June 14. He feels if they start well, then his talented side can overcome World Cup nerves and do well in their remaining matches.

Qualifiers from Group H: Argentina and Croatia.

If matches go according to form, some mouth-watering clashes are in store for the second round.

The likely second round matches are: Spain vs Denmark (Spain to win) Brazil vs Austria or Chile (Brazil to win).

France vs Nigeria or Bulgaria (upset likely).

Argentina or Croatia vs Romania or Columbia (upset likely).

Italy vs Norway (Italy to win).
Holland vs Yugoslavia (either could win).

Possible quarter-finals: Italy vs France, Germany vs England, Holland or Yugoslavia vs Argentina and Brazil vs. Spain.

My prediction for the Final: Brazil vs Germany, the first time the two most consistent sides in the World Cup will have met. It will be a dream Final.

PHOTOGRAPHS:COLORSPORT

GOPICHAND, ranked No. 38 in the International Badminton Federation rankings, is the country's brightest prospect. The 24-year-old current National champion, born in the coastal Andhra town of Ongole in Prakasam district, will be taking part in his eighth IBF ranking tournament of the season when he figures in the Japan Open in January.

Besides the World and the All-England Championships, he has already played in the Swiss, Polish, Dutch, Danish and the Indian Open tournaments. The second son of Indian Overseas Bank chief manager Mr Bose and housewife Subbaravamma, Gopichand, working with Indian Oil Corporation as manager (sales) in Secunderabad, will play in his third All-England Championship in March 1998 and prior to that will lead the Indian team in the Thomas Cup zonal rounds in Manila.

Here are excerpts from the interview:

How do you see the forthcoming All-England Championship?

Normally, it's a very tough tournament. Everyone from the top is playing in this prestigious tournament. As of now, I don't know how much time I'll get to prepare for it. But I think if I prepare well before the big event and if things go all right for me I think I should be able to do well. There are a lot more factors which depend on me progressing there. I think if I'm fit enough to play the All-England, I'll try and put up a good show.

Can you emulate Prakash (Padukone)?

Today if I've to think of winning the All-England, (like Prakash), it's very difficult. Not that it's impossible. What happens is it's only three players who are ranked above you who matter in the All-England. And beating those three can be done. So it's a possibility Because I've h d good victories this season. It's just that I have to put it all together at the All-England. That's what actually matters. I'm optimisitc.

THAVE AN ALL-ROUND CAME NOW!

Says current national badminton champion P.GOPICHAND

What's your main weapon?

It depends on a lot of things.

Normally, if I'm playing in India, it's my speed. If I'm playing abroad, it's a bit of deception, a bit of net and a bit of thinking. Deception sometimes doesn't work in India as much as it does outside because players are faster and they react more to a body flick or a racquet flick.

So I have to cut down on that and work more on speed. So it depends on different players and different places where you are playing. If it's too warm and too hot on a day and if I'm playing a European, then I prefer to play long rallies to tire him out and win the match.

How did you become a badminton player?

I took to the game when I was 11 as a hobby. I liked the game, so I just played it. I never thought of going this far. It was never on my mind when I started playing in Hyderabad that I should become a Prakash Padukone or somebody. My Hyderguda house is hardly a kilometre away from the Lal Bahadur Indoor stadium. My elder brother, Rajashekar who is now doing his Phd in Santa Barbara, California, used to play there and one day I just happened to be there with him. That's how I picked up the game. My aunt

Ms Manchala (mother's younger sister) was a State No.1 in 1973.

When did you get serious about the game?

When I was 16 or 17. But I regularly used to play in the mornings and evenings just to get fit. I never really thought of playing at the international level, or even at the national level. But when I was 17, I won the Junior State and the Goa Junior Nationals. It was then that I thought that, maybe, I have a chance to play well at the national level.

Do you have any role models?

Yes. When I started it was probably not there. But later on, it was Prakash Sir whose footsteps I wanted to follow...and am still following.

Who has helped you out financially on your foreign sojourns?

Now it's primarily the BPL-Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy. But the German circuit I played was thanks to the club in Germany called FC Langenfeld. They took care of my expenses for the Dutch and Danish Opens. But primarily it's being done by Prakash Sir at the Academy.

What about BAI's help? Not till now. Kailash Charan of



Sainath Jewellers in Hyderabad helped me by sponsoring a trip, \$0 I've been lucky that way.

After joining the Academy, what changes have taken place in you? My fitness has improved. I have an all round game now. Previously, I was just an attacking player. Just attack and if it didn't work, I didn't know what to do. But now I have a game on which I can fall back on. I can play defense too. Also the academy has

been helpful in showing ways in which to out-think opponents and some of the finer points like that. Prakash Sir and Vimal are so helpful and there cannot be anyone better than them to learn from.

In betwen your first two
All-England Championships, you
did suffer from a major injury.
Did you feel like giving up the
game in frustration?
Yes. I was injured during the 1994

Pune National Games while playing a doubles match. I suffered a ligament tear on the knee. It had to be reconstructed. I was out of badminton for 7-8 months. I was on the bed for quite some time.

By the time I returned to the circuit and started winning tournaments I had lost more than a year's time. I was ranked No.1 before the injury and it took me almost a year and two months to win a major tournament. Then I had to consolidate my position in the domestic circuit. It took me two years to do that and get back to the international fold.

In the meanwhile, I had moved from Hyderabad to Bangalore which took some time to get adjusted to before the Academy sponsored my second trip to the All-England. Of course, though I missed three All-Englands, rather, three good years of international badminton, I used my injury period to finish my graduation as my first All-England sojourn clashed with my BA exams. But at no point of time did the frustration engulf me.

How do you see Prakash as a coach?

It was always a problem for me because he was such a big figure for me when I was a junior. I always remember Prakash Sir as a person who is there on the wall in a poster. But after I progressed in my career and came to know him and having been with him for so long now, I'd say he's really a great person. One of the most sincere persons I've seen who is basically got the best heart. As a coach he is always willing to listen to the players and that's the biggest asset. Not many coaches do that.

Of course, I was-playing well before joining the academy. If I say that because of the academy I've scaled this high, I wouldn't be giving any credit to my earlier coaches in Hyderabad. I won the Junior Nationals under S,M.Arif Sir in Hyderabad. And I was also under him when I was ranked No.1 in 1993. But the academy helped me to develop my game in a more mature way.

Interviewed by Aishwarya Lakshmi

ANALYSIS

READERS' FORUM

PREJUDICED?

Straits,
Disappointing.....These have been just some of the adjectives attributed to the Indian cricket team recently. But are we not too fast in criticising? To set the record straight while it's obvious that there is a lot of scope for improvement, the situation today is not really as bad as it seems.

After all we did win the Sahara Cup, didn't we? And that too in quite a remarkable fashion. And what about the win in Pakistan itself against some pretty trying odds, and defeating Sri Lanka in the not-so-distant past?

Secondly, aren't we somewhere to blame? Isn't there something about promoting cricket at the 'grassroots' level? In India domestic cricket is given the worst of cold shoulder treatments. Consider this.

In the not too distant past we have played some of our most important domestic matches e.g. the Challenger Trophy, and a whole series of important benefit matches. Where was live transmission (or even highlights) and sponsors for these? Even the news bulletins did not consider it important enough to report the results at the end of the day.

This is when we were religiously sitting and watching Pakistan vs West Indies, Australia vs New Zealand or the matches in Sharjah, and even pride ourselves on keeping up to date with the English County matches.

We keep talking about encouraging new players in order to fill in the gaps. These domestic matches are an excellent way of spotting talent. Is this the way we are going about it? If so, maybe we should simply prepare ourselves for similar mistakes in Indian cricket in the

time to come.

ANUBHA CHARAN, Pune

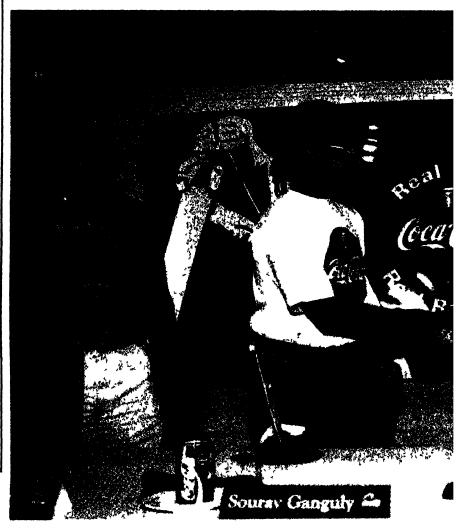
COMING OF AGE

SELF BELIEF and sporting skills make a terrific concoction—a mixture, that often defies the odds and wipes out the opposition by its sheer intensity. The 'Prince of Calcutta' has got it all.

Sourav Ganguly had a disastrous start to his international career way back in 1991 in Australia. But six seasons later he is a truly committed

and ambitious cricketer, striving to become a distinguished figure in Indian cricket. The Englishmen at Lord's became spellbound when they witnessed two successive centuries. In Toronto and Pakistan his all round ability flourished in a more convincing way.

The 'Secret Weapon' of Tendulkar, has already crossed the milestone of one thousand invaluable Test runs and has scored splendid and artistic hundreds. It is noteworthy, that most of his remarkable innings were on foreign grounds and, against the top cricket · playing nations. Thus he possesses the tenacity which is indispensible in modern cricket. As an ardent supporter of Sourav, Geoffrey Boycott always appreciates the all-round ability of Sourav. But inspite of his consistency and magnificent performances both with the bat and the ball, Sachin Tendulkar perhaps still has a doubt in



his mind about that. Ganguly has been steadily improving his fielding and running between the wickets.

After Sachin, Sourav today is arguably the most valuable and marketable player in the team as proved by the sponsors like Coca-Cola and Kingfisher.

A few years back the picture was totally different.
The heart-throb of Bengal is getting more and more fan mail. His eye-catching displays, glorious square-cuts, breath-taking cover drives always serve a grand feast for the spectators. He is indeed calm, cool and unflappable in character, both on and off the field. He picks his words with care. In fact, Ganguly's bat does a lot of talking for him. Despite technical alertness Sourav's real Safalta Ka Raaz is his killer-instinct and iron determination.

Without exaggerating a bit it can be said that today the sheer intensity of

international cricket drains out the energy of a player, and not only that, the periods of recuperation in between is inadequate. But Ganguly has no complaint. Neither indiscreet nor ignominious criticism can depress him.

However, what Ganguly needs for a better and brighter tomorrow is nothing but a lot of motivation from the people as well as the media, of India. This flamboyant cricketer has to prove that if you can conquer your mind, you can conquer your opponents on a cricket ground. Ganguly, 'arise, go forth and conquer'. We are ever with you whole-heartedly, because you are "World's envy, India's pride"



DEBASHISH DASGUPTA, Bankura, West Bengal

THE BEST?

EFT HANDED batsmen are always difficult customers for the bowlers. With their natural elegance and flair, they are always graceful. It is a pity, India has not produced too many quality left-hand batsmen in her ranks. Since Independence, there have been eight left handed batsmen who have played in fifteen or more Tests for India. They are —Nari Contractor, Salim Durrani. Rusi Surtì, Ajit Wadekar, Eknath Solkar, Karsan Ghavri, Vinod Kambli and Sourav Ganguly. Of them, Surti, Solkar and Ghavri were in the nature of utility cricketers.

Cricket was a different ball game in the era of Contractor and Durrani. Nari Contractor had to bring an abrupt end to his career owing to an unfortunate near-fatal accident. Till then, he maintained an average Test record. Salim Durrani is the eternal "Prince Charming" of Indian cricket. However, he had a care free approach to the game and sometimes gifted his wicket away. Ajit Wadekar was a classy, gifted, world-class batsman.

But he often choked under pressure and got out in the "nervous nineties" for the maximum number of times in Test cricket along with Majid Khan of Pakistan. Somehow, his performance in Tests was not the true reflection of his talent. Vinod Kambli is another gifted batsman but he failed to live up to his "Vini Vidi Vici" expectations. His lack of self-discipline accounts for his own downfall. Sourav Ganguly is the only cricketer who has transformed his potential into performances. Performance is the last word for the players. Sourav has been a consistent performer. It is often said that a player is not complete until he performs well in English conditions. For the Indians, the ultimate challenge is to excel against arch-rival Pakistan, and the games against them are more than a cricket match. Sourav Ganguly has emerged champion on both the above counts. His record in the Tests and one-dayers has been speaking for itself.

The legendary Sir Neville Cardus was correct in his writing that "The score board conceals more and reveals less". Runs are important for the players but how one amasses his runs is also important. In the case of Ganguly, the score card does not speak of his steely resolve, unflappable temperament, unruffled technique and tenacity. Sourav Ganguly is an exquisite timer of the ball. Such is his precision, he is not bothered about his footwork like Majid Khan. No one in the world at present, executes the cover drive more majestically than him. But he had displayed at Mohali against the Lankans that he is equally elegant in his on-side game also. His continuous self evaluation and eagerness for learning has already made him a world class batsman. Is he the greatest left-hand batsman the country has ever produced?



SUBIR KUMAR SEN, Calcutta T'is said that Lady Jessie Bradman made one of the greatest contributions to Australian cricket by giving her husband Sir Donald Bradman the family security and mental peace he required in order to be "The Greatest" of them all.

By the same score, Bev Waugh made one of the most significant contributions ever to Australian sport in the maternity ward of Sydney's Canterbury hospital on the evening of March 2, 1965.

Forget Shane Warne, this was cricket's delivery of the century.

"I can still see the clock on the wall, 8.14 and 8.18 on a Wednesday



champion tennis player. Now she uses her racquet talents as a champion squash player who defended her Australian masters' title.

She didn't start playing the game until she was 38. Now, as the national 50-55 age group women's champion she is still playing top level open women's competitions as a



The Waugh twins: Mark and Steve. Loved and adored in Australia, much respected and feared internationally

night,"she recalls on the arrival of her twins, Stephen Roger and Mark Edward who together have now scored 25 Test centuries and more than 25,000 Test runs for this country.

"I was in labour every night for a week. I remember it was an absolute miracle. People would say, 'You poor thing. You've got twins, but I thought I was just absolutely blessed."'

Australian cricket was blessed too. No wonder she is referred to as "The Mother Of All Waugh Games". But far from being merely the mother of the Waugh boys. Bev Waugh is an accomplished sportswoman in her own right.

Before producing champion cricketers (her other sons both play Sheffield and club cricket), she was a grandmother, a title conferred on her by the birth of Steve and wife Lynett's daughter Rosalie.

Few people who have traded blows with her on a squash court doubt that her attitude to sport has been more than a passing influence on two of Australian cricket's greats. But sport is rarely a talking point when the Waughs get together. "We have enough sport in our lives," says Bev, "and when we see each other we talk about other things." One exception was the time Mark was at his mum's place when Steve dropped in to break the news that his twin had been selected for Australia to play England in Adelaide during the 1990-91 season. "There was great excitement about Mark's news," says Mrs

Waugh, "but I said straight away whose place has he taken? Because I knew Stephen's place was being spoken about. Stephen had a bit of a glum look on his face, and said it was his place, I mean, what do you do? Stephen was the one who told Mark. He said congratulations. How hard would that have been for him?

"But in retrospect that led Stephen on to bigger and better things. If you get dropped you can use that in one of two ways. You can give up or fight back. Mentally, no one is tougher than Stephen." Public perceptions of the twins—Steve the batting achiever and Mark the carefree showman who can make it all look so easy—are wide off the mark according to their mother.

"It's hard to take when people say that Mark doesn't care. He looks as if he's laid back," but he wants to go out and achieve. It doesn't please him to get low scores. From a very young age, Mark has always been a high achiever at school work, everything Stephen achieved as highly as he did but with less effort. Stephen early on probably enjoyed things a little more, enjoyed school a lot more. He didn't worry that much. But it's developed in him to be hard. He's developed that to a very big extent."

Mrs Waugh was in England to watch her sons help retain the Ashes, but she found their lives on tour so busy that she "virtually had to make an appointment to see them."

"As they were coming out of the dressing room one time, they were talking to this well dressed gentleman and introduced me, but the name didn't register because I was more interested in asking the boys a couple of questions. Later I said, 'Who did you introduce me to?'and Stephen said "it was just the ex-prime minister John Major."

Mrs Waugh's big message is "never quit".

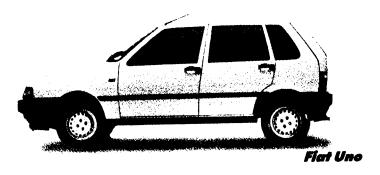
"There's no such word as can't and I've taught my boys that 'Stay in there and have a go.' "It's Bev Waugh talking but it sounds like Steve Waugh batting.

Andy O'Brien, Australia



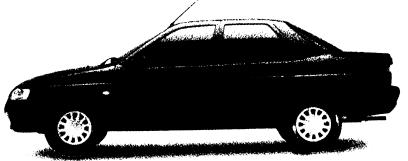
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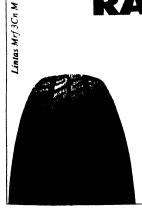


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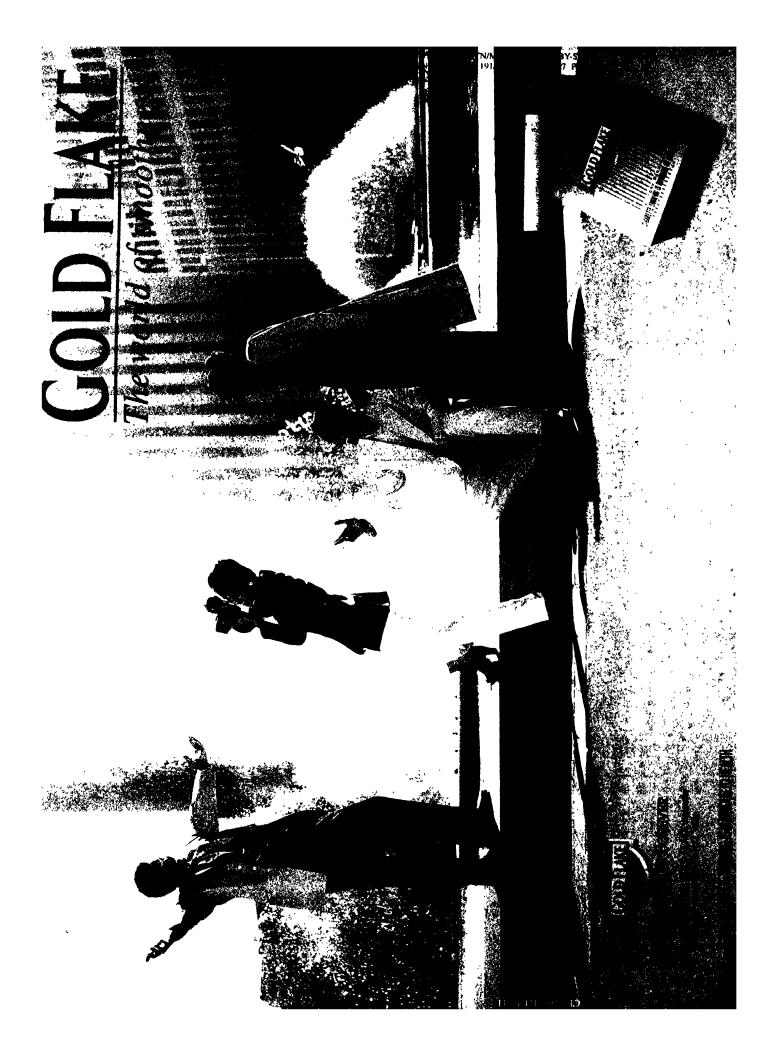


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WHAT AILS AMERICAN TENNIS?

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STARTING AFRESH

Mohammed Azharuddin has started his second innings as the captain of India on a winning note. Is Indian cricket under him headed for better days?

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SONEAR...AND YETSOFAR

Vishwanathan Anand blew a great chance to become the World Champion when he lost the tie-breaker to Anatoly Karpov. But still, the future is bright

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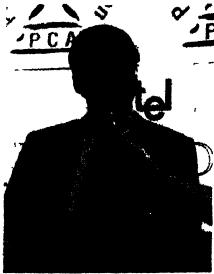
WHAT AILS AMERICAN TENNIS

With all the major stars including Sampras crashing out of the Australian Open, the game's popularity is on the wane. A look at why the U. S of A is not producing champions like it did in the past

COLORSPORT

COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF AZHARUDDIN BY AFP AND THAT OF PETE SAMPRAS BY







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FREEWHEELING

Editor Mansur Alı Khan Pataudı

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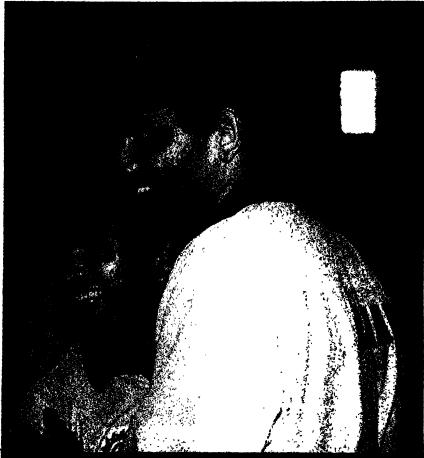
PPED AT THE

P H O T O F E A T U R E





Saurav Ganguly started this year by picking up from where he left off in '97. Reshid Latif could only watch as Saurav rode roughshod over his bowlers. His 124 in the final saw him at his elegant best



India won the tournament largely because Sachin Tendulkar lifted his game and form by a couple of notches. He came good both with the bat and the ball. Having won the tournament, he showed good team spirit by warmly hugging his captain

POST

That is what happened to Pakistan at the Independence Cup tournament in Dhaka

P H O T O F E A T U R E



Cricket followers all over the sub-continent can go to any heights to support their teams. Here Bangladeshis supporting Pakistan, fellow proceedings perched proceriously on a roof



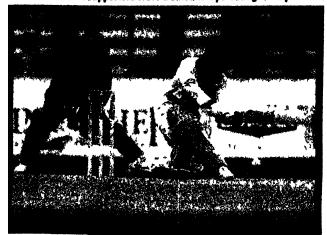
Seed Anwar was devastated that even his 140 in the third final was not enough to get his country the trophy. Well, then again that's cripket!



Minnows Bengledesk understandably could not put up a big fight against their sessoned appearants. In the match against Pokietan they secred only 134 runs. Mehammed Raffique vivie top secred will 29 in the match is seen in action here



Eupport was certainly act lacking for the Indian team too, and Saurav Ganguly a.k.a Royal Bengal tiger (notice the poster in front) was a not ravourite. At the end the Indian supporters were treated to a pulsating win by their heroes



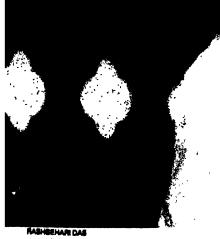
tobin Singh's 82 off 82 balls under falling light was a delight to watch. This innings of his will not be forgotten by anyone in a hurry, spec of all by flobje histooff



ijaz Ahmed took the fight right into the Indian camp by plundering 117 in the decisive final. Overall, he had a good tournament with the



s second innings as the captain on ider him headed for better times?



soothed frayed tempers of the cricket-crazy fans post-Sharjah, but viewed from the long-term perspective, it has hardly been a step forward for Indian cricket.

Having said that, let's not take anything away from Azhar's men who fashioned an improbable victory. Before Dhaka, no team had had ever scored 314 in a one-day game and lost. Pakistan did not look like losing it either till, Lady Luck, having deserted the Indian camp for better part of last year, came and settled on Azhar's shoulders so that he could fly back with the Cup.

In fact, it was one of those games which neither teams deserved to lose (or win, depending on which side of

the border you belonged). The bowling and fielding of both India and Pakistan in the third final was at best club standard. However, the batting, on a featherbed, flourished.

Saeed Anwar and Ijaz Ahmed played their parts well. So did Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Robin Singh. But, in the end, the side which kept its nerves better nosed the other out in a photo-finish.

Beating Pakistan, who had come with a B-grade bowling attack was no big deal as was shown by Tendulkar's men in Toronto last year. In fact, each of the four wins in the Sahara Cup was more emphatic than the other in conditions which were alien to both the teams.

In Dhaka, India did beat Pakistan quite convincingly in the league and also in the first final, but the manner in which Azhar's men were crushed in the second game, showed that none of the perils afflicting Indian cricket, had been sorted out.

Those who say Azhar's captaincy has been responsible for a turnaround in India's cricket fortunes, clearly do not know their cricket.

To be fair to him, Azhar began his second innings in the hot seat, on a positive and confident note. He was certainly under pressure—as he was not the most popular choice as captain—but he handled that well. He also deserves a pat on the back for drawing the line for the selectors.

IMPRESSING LIKE YC

Hand yet, was branded a failure both as a batsman as well as a captain.

But, relieved of the cares of captaincy, Sachin Tendulkar turned the National Stadium at Dhaka into his own stage where he performed with aplomb. The-Man-of-the-Series award bestowed on him was a just evaluation of his contribution to India's Cup victory.

It was the vintage Sachin once more. But what was responsible for this turnaround? The general notion is that Sachin the batsman was being destroyed by the pressures of leading an enigmatic side. That he is better off without the reins. Sachin, however, does not agree.

"Even when I had been in charge, I have played like this," he pointed out in several post-match Press conferences.

No one can deny Sachin's contention. The master blaster did play some explosive knocks when at the helm, but the fact remained that so great was Sachin's pre-occupation with the team's performance that he invariably went in to bat under enormous pressure. The harder he tried to pull his team up, the less he succeeded. But that essentially is Sachin for you. Even today, he would gladly exchange his Test hundreds for a series win.

Once he had accepted the loss of captaincy the self-invited pressures vanished. Once more, the supreme artist in him found the freedom to express himself with the willow.

Anyone who knows him closely will tell you just how dear the Indian captaincy was to Sachin. The manner in which the captaincy was snatched

Sachin Tendulkar: Praying for a better year

Unlike Tendulkar, Azhar refused to let the selectors dictate the playing XI or batting order. By giving back the opening slot to endulkar, Azhar had clearly sent out the right signals. And by moving himself up to No 3, he had got the mechanics of a one-day game right At last, India's best three batsmen—those most likely to score hundreds in a 50-over game—were batting at the top of the order

Tactically, he hardly produced anything brilliant which is worth a mention. Robin Singh was promoted yet again —with another left-hander at the crease ahead of an in-form. Azhar—when Tendulkar had already given the Indians a heady start with his sophisticated brand of

Azharuddin with wife Sangeeta during a commercial shoot. With his personal life no longer under the scanner, Azhar is a much relaxed man these days



Sachin Tendulkar proves once again why he is so feared by bowlers all over

away from him surely must have left him a trifle dejected. To overcome this hurt and personal tragedy, Sachin sought solace from his batsmanship.

He needed to give an expression to his inner frustrations, the hurt which had left him numb. The more his heart bled, the more savagely he hit out. Only, he had directed his ire towards the Pakistan bowlers and not towards the selectors.

Qualitatively and quantitatively Sachin may have played many better knocks than those he scripted in Dhaka, but what set these knocks apart was that each of them was played with a certain objective in mind.

When in mood he can butcher any bowling in the world. But in Dhaka, it was cold-blooded murder of Pakistan bowling. Aqqib Javed, Azhar Mehmood and Saqlain Mushtaq were all made to look like novices as the little master went on the rampage.

The fact that the Indian thinktank had given Navjyot Sidhu the responsibility of taking care of Saqlain's restrictive off-spin, perhaps hurt his ego as Sachin took it upon himself to destroy the bowler's morale. The ease with which he stepped out to loft Saqlain into the stands in the finals as soon as he was brought on, showed what he had in mind. By choosing to hit the ball with the spin—over the straight field Sachin showed that there was a method to his madñess.

But then Sachin is rarely known to do anything whimsically. The Little Big Man of Indian cricket is walking tall again.

Sumit Mukherjee



pinch-hitting.

While the move had failed miserably at Sharjah, it had succeeded in Dhaka, for the wrong reason. In Sharjah, again versus Pakistan, the asking rate was hardly as high as it was here. Yet, Robin had swung wildly at the first ball he faced (and perished), in truly pinch-hitting style. Here, when he was required to add further momentum to the proceedings, Robin played like a top-order batsman and got a big partnership going. The rest is history.

In two tournaments with not much time having elapsed, both Sachin and Azhar made the same mistake. Sachin was lambasted because his error of judgement proved costly, while Azhar walked tall after an improbable victory. That is what success does.

After losing the second match of the final, Azhar made the same noises in the post-match Press conference

—poor fielding, bowlers' lack of length-and-line and no application on the part of batsmen —as Tendulkar had been making over the past year, or even Azhar himself during the last days of his captaincy the first time around.

The only revelation was Azhar's batting. His form and fluency was almost enviable. The fact that he and Tendulkar clicked together, meant the Indian innings got some momentum early on. That was more than enough to take the wind out of a Pakistan side which was low on spirit. In fact, Rashid Latif's band would go down in history as one of the most mundane bunches ever put together by the Pakistan selectors, no matter what the compulsions. There seemed to be no fight in them till India gift-wrapped a victory to them to tie the three-match final 1-1.

In the decider, Pakistan all but took it away till India lit up the gloom at the National Stadium with a truly heroic effort which has made a man out of the new lad Hrishikesh Kanitkar.

While the Dhaka thriller will go down in the record books for the sheer magnitude of the effort, India's win over the same opponents in Karachi was perhaps qualitatively a shade better.

Four months before, India had chased another 300-plus target and fallen short by just two runs. Azhar, who had led the charge in Colombo versus Sri Lanka had been a hapless spectator at one end as his team went down. He did not contribute much with the bat in the final game in Dhaka, but by staying put in the middle as the umpires and the fielding side went in amid failing light, Azhar had made a strong statement.

It was heartening to see Azhar deeply concerned about India's fortunes instead of his singularly carefree attitude in the past year or so. After losing the captaincy to Tendulkar, he went on record saying he was enjoying his batting. But, now that he is the captain again, one can only hope he will continue to enjoy both roles till it is time again for Sachin to don the mantle.

TAKING A FRESH

India's most successful cricket captain has started his second bout of captaincy in a relaxed and confident manner. Moreover. he also took time off to talk on a variety of issues

FROM SABYASACHI SARKAR. **DHAKA**

So how does it finally feel to have broken Allan Border's record of playing the highest number of one-day internationals?

Feels great This is an achievement for any cricketer Looking back, I feel that playing for 14 years at a stretch was not an easy task No I hadn t thought that I would ever play 273 one-dayers No one starts playing with such things in mind Today it seems that maintaining my physical fitness must have been the key to this success Patience, confidence and hard work are also big factors. It is rather difficult to say which one of these is the prime factor in my case If you look at my career, I have missed two Test matches on account of injury and also a few one-dayers On the whole, it was satisfactory

Were you pleasantly surprised when the selectors reappointed you as the Indian captain?

I did not hope to become the captain again But now that it has happened, I want to do my best I have been the captain for six and a half years before this and I must say that I have enjoyed it thoroughly I believe there is nothing like leading your country to a victory It's wonderful!

How do you rate the team that was handed over to you?

The stalwarts. Azharuddin and India will

depend heavily on Tendulkar



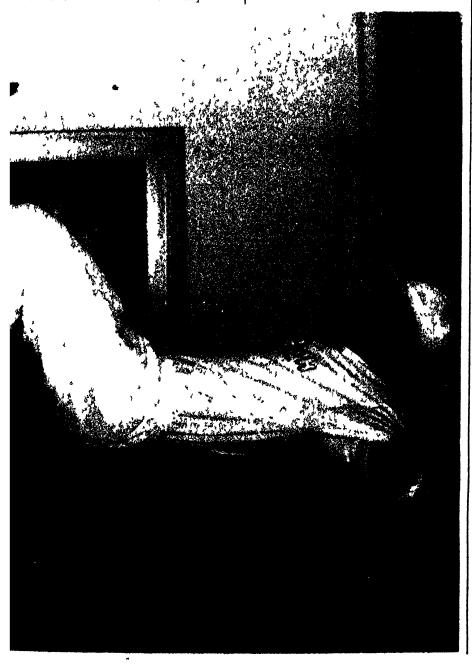
Lots and lots of progress is needed We should start preparing for the '99 World Cup from right now Similarly, there is an immediate need of numerous young talented cricketers suitable for the one-day game. In this age of close competition, no one holds a regular place in the team. We have no dearth of talented cricketers but I will not single out anyone in particular. That would not be favourably taken. But if the selectors ask me. I may give them some names.

I saw England in Sharjah They have taken in a host of one-day

cricketers Each of them is a specialist If we want to do something good in the World Cup, we will have to think in the same way

Looking back, what has been the most memorable moment for you in your 14-year chequered career?

I can't forget the moment India beat Pakistan in Bangalore during the 96 World Cup I still remember winning the Hero Cup in Calcutta in 1993, and winning the Asia Cup in Sharjah in 1995



If you were to analyse it as a batsman which was your most memorable innings so far?

Oh no, I cannot single out any in particular Still I may mention the century I rattled in Baroda against New Zealand off 62 balls And in 1993, at Gwalior --- I played two good innings in two consecutive matches against England We were losing the series 1-3 But the Gwalior match made it 3-3 Personally, I think I batted well in the 1992 World Cup Scored about 330 Pity being run out by Border in the Australia match, when we were on the verge of winning it Also I must mention the Asia Cup 1991 and 1995, I still remember both the Asia Cup finals I had a big score in the 1995 Asia Cup final

What has been the saddest moment for you as a cricketer?

Our shabby performance in the 1992 Australia World Cup still pains me I would also like to forget the 1992 South Africa tour. It was horrible

Now that you have broken Border's record, have you already set your sights on Desmond Haynes' world record of most runs in one-dayers?

How many runs did he score? A little more than 8,500, isn't it? (8619 to be precise) I have scored only 7,700 Don't think I'm over-confident, but I think I shall make it I believe in destiny If everything goes right, it (the record) should happen

Looking ahead, what are your goals for the future?

Perhaps I will not be able to play 400 one-day matches, but 350 is a possibility I am 34 now, and I want to play for another 3 to 4 years Sunny bhai has played till 38 years of age I want to play on, so I keep myself fit 25 hundreds in Test cricket—that is what I wish for I wish to play 100 Tests, that is another 12 to go And yes, I would love to lead India to win the World Cup If fate permits, that may happen too, who knows? (Laughs) At least I don't



Fitness has always been Azher's top priority and his fielding prowess is evidence or that

How is your relationship with ex-cricketers?

They have nothing constructive to offer. The majority of them only criticise. No, nothing more than this can I say.

The press has also given you some harrowing times. How's your relationship with them now? I have said this earlier, and I repeat, the press creates a star only to destroy him in the end. I speak from my own experience. I think, the media should support players instead of criticising them. We do get money, but one should also copsider the amount of

"I have said this earlier, and I repeat, the press creates a star to destroy him in the end. I speak from my own experience. I think, the media should support players instead of criticising them. We do get money, but one should also consider the amount of pressure and stress we take. The media should not enter a cricketer's private life."—Azharuddin

pressure and stress we take. The media should not enter a cricketer's private life.

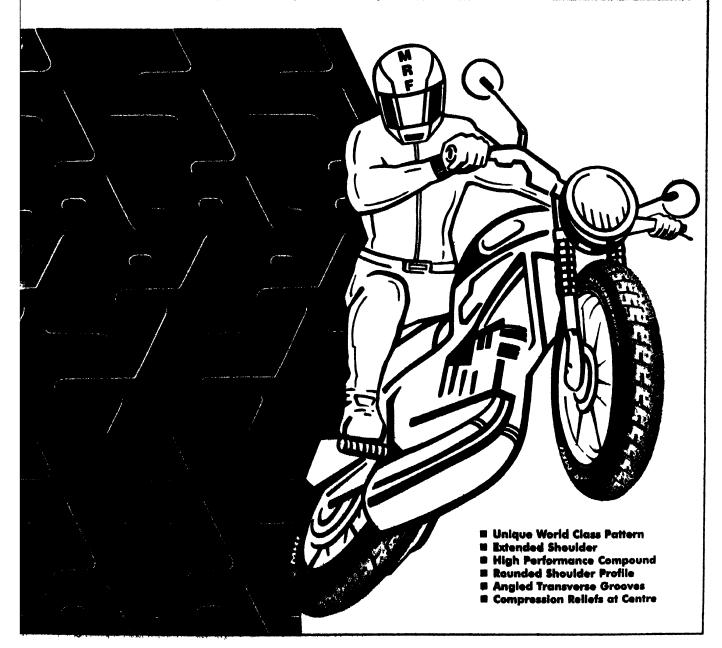
You have been intensely involved with the sport for the past 14 years. How have you seen cricket evolve down the years?
It changed so fast! When I came in, that was 1984, everything was different. Now it has totally changed. Lots of money, TV, logos, sponsors ... the media has become so powerful. Now, cricket is the number one game in this country. I think, cricketers are taking more stress now. Speaking for myself, I take more stress now than I use to in 1984-85.

Have you yet, had the **ULTIMATE** riding experience..?



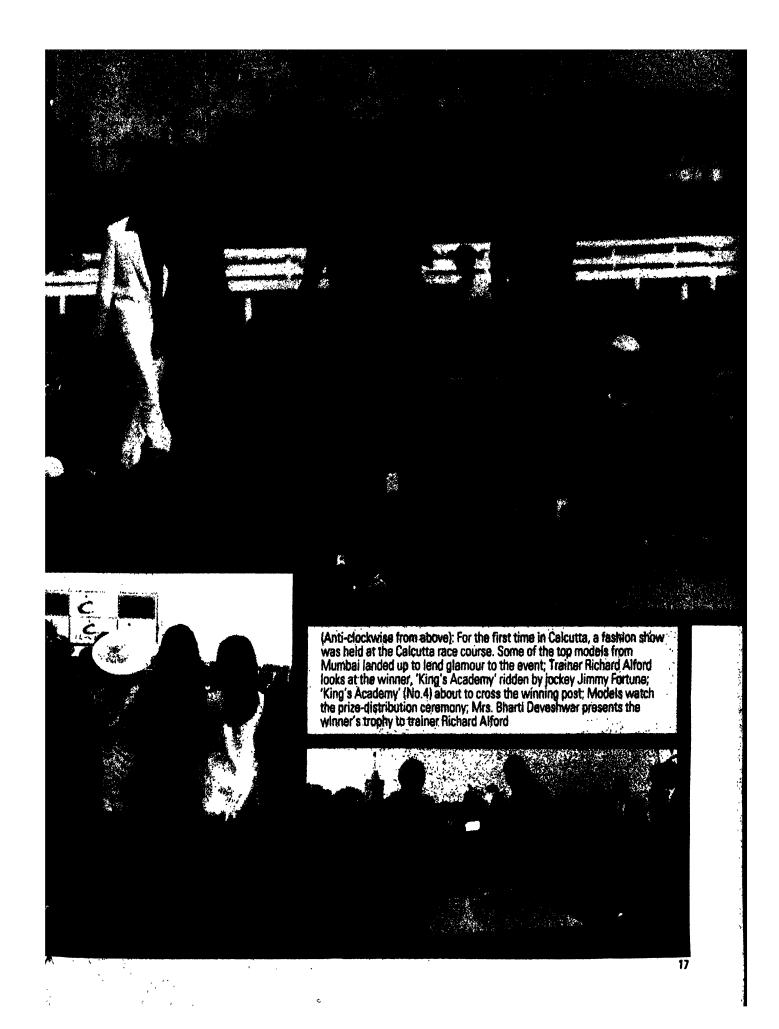
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DEFYING GRAVITY?



Indecent

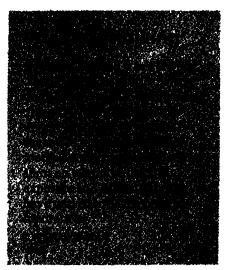
No doubt all the photos (Sportsworld, Dec.'97) were superb in their own right, but this picture in question of Martina Hingis that showed her bare buttocks took the cake. This only goes to show the the photographer's mentality while taking the picture.

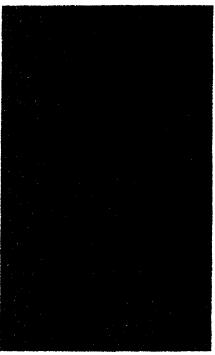
You can't fault the man who just clicks for a living? This is his profession. But playing before the full stands, clad in this manner, is not just tennis, that

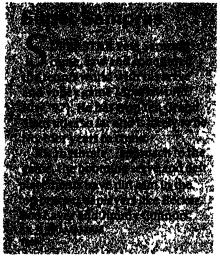
too for a player of Hingis' stature

Well, winning is what's all about. But this does not necessarily mean that a woman should pay scant attention to the attire. Her top was fully covered with a high neckline. This means the dress was designed with full knowledge of what it would reveal in the course of play. This way the paying public would be treated to a double fare -the game and, of course, the flesh. What more could the spectators ask for?

ARTA MISHRA, Cuttack











DW that Mohammad Azharuddin and his boys have returned triumphant from Azhar's maiden venture in his second innings as the captain of the Indian cricketteam, it would be politically incorrect to criticise the Indian cricket selectors. Over the years, they have received more than their fair share of brickbats and nay little or no bouquets. Mohinder Amarnath was amongst the first to belishe cat calling them a bunch of jokers" -a quote that has been used so much that it

has now become a clicke to the annals of Indian cricket writing.

Recently, the media and most of the former players -both Indian and foreign - who have a more their workshie knowledge of how things sunction in the: cricketing arena (hattles are not mercedurily lought our in the middle between two regint in india nave Circle trempetves boarse against the selection and cheek collective window to chlosing seams.

[138 well groupers the greens (leak disopers)



alarming unpopularity amongst the media in particular, and the masses (remember that cricket has become the national passion) in general, preferred to adopt the vow of stlence. In fact, even after the Bangladesh win the selectors have been somewhat guarded when issuing statements to the press. Against this backdrop let us venture forth and

The selectors somewhat taken aback by their:

analyse why the Indian media and even very respected former cricketers are always at hammer and tongs with the Rive Wise Men. Is this because the fourth estate and the former cricketers are unreasonably biased against the selection committee? Is it because every one has un. axe to grind with the elite committee? Or, is it simply because the media earn their bread from the cricketers and not the selectors that prompt them to go spewing. vitriol when a popular cricketer is demoted or dropped?

While on the surface the above reasons could hold a little water: in reality it is not so. More often than not the selectors themselves bungle up things for their own good. Should'we attempt to analyse the actions of the selectors and their decisions that draw flak from the media, compare them with the reactions that it has evoked not just from the ordinary cricket writer and the masses, but from people who are revered in the world of cricket (some of whom are legends in their own right) we get an abysmal image of the Indian cricket selectors.

While doing research for this article and after going through numerous clippings files, this correspondent. has come across many occasions where selectors (both former and present) have contradicted themselves and many when the opinions voiced by an ordinary lournalist have been supported more than whole heartedly and vociferously by the big names in: cricket.

Since the most recent attack on the selectors came after Azharuddin was re-appointed as the captain let us start with a classic case of contradiction. After handing over Azhar his second lease as a captain, Kishen Rungta, the selector from the Central Zone had told the press, "Azhar was removed from the capraincy at that time as there was a lot of pressure because of his personal life; Now things have settled down and he's in



electronic) and the selectors reached almost unprecedented proportions just before the Coca-Cola Independence Cup in Bangladesh. The selectors actions of re-appointing Azhaiuddin as the captain. and in one collective case of sidelining, saw six from the squad that was selected for the one-dayets in Sharjah cooling their needs, so incessed the media that every major newspapej, every minor vernacular and all TV stations for sake a good and my of column centimetres and second begin in which their protest.

a proper frame of mind "Mr Rungta makes it very clear in his statement that it was Azhar's personal life that cost him the Indian captaincy

Now compare this statement to what Gundappa Viswanath had to say when Azhar was stripped of the captaincy In August 1996 Viswanath, then the chairman of selectors, remarked, "Azhar's captaincy has not been up to the mark in the past couple of series (the '96 World Cup and the England tour). The selectors therefore, felt the need for a change." Notice that this statement is in direct contradiction to the quote above. The media had questioned and Viswanath had categorically denied that Azhar had been dropped on personal grounds, cricketing failure was the reason cited. Incidentally, Mr Rungta was part of the selection committee even then

Another reason why the selectors were so maligned is for their decision to drop Azharuddin, bring him back and then re-appoint him as captain just a series after that infamous run-out in Sharjah against the West Indies. That crucial run-out, to an extent, was responsible for getting India out of the reckoning

The media during the process of selecting the team for the one-day series against Sri Lanka, immediately after the Sharjah debacle, reported that Azharuddin was given a "talking to" by the selectors over his attitude. Azhar was reportedly called on his mobile phone and was given a dressing down for twenty minutes by the selectors. No one in the selection committee contradicted this piece of reportage. After the team was chosen for the one-day series on 18 Dec. '97 against Sri Lanka, Jyoti Bajpai, the Joint Secretary of the BCCI told the press, "In so many words, we told



The Indian team at Sharjah Six heads rolled after this tournament, but the selectors offered no reasons for any omession

Rahul Oravid finally seems to have given up woodering as to sylvy he cannot make it to the lucian team inspite of being so consistent.



him (Azhar) that the whole team is affected when an experienced player performs below his optimum level. Azhar was told to take more interest in the team management as he was a very senior player,"

Yet, on January 2, 1998, after the selectors chose Azharuddin as the captain for the Independence Cup in Dhake. Kishen Rungia told the press when asked about this move. "It was the press which questioned Azhar's attitude. We did not reprimant him as has been reported. We just washed to boost his spirit which was very low after so many negative things were written and spoken on "V about him after the Sharjah debacke."

Now why did this denial baye to come weeks efter it was reported that Azharuddin, was given a "talking to" by the national selectors? If for some reason Mr. Jyoff sample was missippled by the national press why did the selectors sake account to give their point of view? Is the alone mayer at anywar gives their point of view? Is the alone mayer at anywar gives their point of view? Is the alone mayer at anywar gives their point of view? Is the alone mayer at anywar gives their point of the will rever know.

yet two very senior members of the Indian cricket administration had contradicted themselves within a matter of weeks.

After Azharuddin was handed over the captainty and when questioned about Sachin Tendulkar's duster as the Indian national captain, Ramakani Desai the present chairman of the selection committee remarked rather ambiguously. "He (Tendulkar) did nothing wrong, but we thought that whatever is going wrong is because of the pressures of captainty." Guild we have a clearer message coming from the selectors, please?

However, this is what the legendary Richie Benaud had to remark after Sachin Tendulkar was stripped of the captaincy. "Sachin Tendulkar is the latest victim of what seems to be at the moment, the whitm of administrators and selectors who find themselves under pressure."

Moving on from the captaincy issue to another much talked about issue in recent times—the axing of six

members from the team that went to Sharjah, namely: Rahul Dravid, Anil Kumble, Abey Kuruvilla, Venkaresh Prasad, Vinod Kambli and Saba Karim—, this is what the 'experts' had to say.

Kapil Dev whose dedication to Indian cricket was. never in doubt, exclaimed, "If they made the changes because they wanted to; what were the selectors trying to prove? And if it was due to poor performances, were these six players the only failures in the team?"

Dilip Vengsarkar did not mince words either. In his newspaper column Vengsarkar blasted out, "But then, surely this is no way to go about building a team for the future. By dropping players like Dravid, Prasad and Kambli in one single strike, the selectors have proved that they are there to put India at the bottom of the ladder in world cricket. What other conclusions can one arrive by such an irrational move? But then who's to question the wisdom of such a selection? There's no accountability as far as the selectors are concerned. They can do as they please, manipulate all they want and get away with their misdeeds. And therein lies the tragedy of Indian cricket."

After all this, did the selectors justify their logic behind the decision that drew flak from all quarters? No way, they preferred to keep brazenly silent on the whole issue and simply let the matter die out. Only after the victory in the Dhaka tournament did selectors comment, "Rahul has a good future and should understand that being dropped from one-dayers does not mean he is not fit to play international ties." Oh, come on give us a break. A player who was ranked 6th in the January edition of the Wisden Cricket Monthly's list of the top 20 batsmen in the world is not in the Indian XIV.

If Sachin Tendulkar looked a trifle under par during his stint as the captain, is he totally to blame? The selectors tied him in knots, by not giving him the team of his choice, by dictating who should make the playing XI, even to the extent of specifying the batting line-up and relegating Tendulkar to the No.4 slot. As Tendulkar himself said after he was stripped of the captaincy, "I rarely got the players I wanted. The teams that were selected were entirely the choice of the selectors. They even told me what batting order I should follow. I am not complaining on that score, but the captain has to be given a free hand so that he can get the best out of the team according to his plans. Maybe if I had a say in the matter of the team selected, I might have done somewhat better as captain. I just cannot comprehend the reasons which the selectors have mentioned for my removal as captain. If it is my batting form then I want to state that it is not really so. Maybe, they expect me to get a big score every time I go to the crease." If in this frame of mind the selectors were wanting innovative castaincy from Tendulkar weren't they asking for a bit too much?



Ravi Shastri, who is never at a loss of words, had this to say on team selection, "This is crap. How can the captain not get the playing XI of his choice? My logic is simple. If you accept that it is the captain who is going to decide on who will bowl, then there is no point in saddling me with a bowler who I didn't think was suited for the track. He would after all, then be a passenger only."

Even the mercurial Geoffrey Boycott known for his cricketing acumen and who always called a spade a spade came out with all guns blazing, "If Sachin Tendulkar is the preferred choice, (he was then, when Boycott wrote a column for a leading Indian weekly suggesting remedial measures for Indian cricket) then there must be no interference from any selector. That has to be paramount. The captain should have no say in selection, only informal chats with his bosses who in return should back off from talking him what to do.



Mohammad Atharmidin's elevation to captaincy evoked a let of sururies on both occasions

Selectors telling Tendulkar to bat in the middle order and not open in one-dayers is nonsense.

"Selectors issuing directions to a captain suggests that they have no confidence in the man they have chosen. A captain is the selectors' right arm. If he feels he cannot use his own initiative and make instinctive decisions before and during a match, then he is in a straitlacket—a pupper of the selectors."

And then, just look at the sporkling form that Sachila has displayed once the small acket was taken off and when he had no one breathing into his ears telling him what in do. If unshackling Sachila from the burdens of captainer is one reason being flaunted for Sachila regaining his vitzentry with the bur, isn't promoting fully to the species and another sedeen for his

confidence and strokeplay? Surprisingly, not many supported the second school of thought.

This certainly will not be the last time the selectors and the selection committee is going to come under the media's scanner. They are certainly going to face the heat when they come up with illogical and whimsical choices and unjustified chopping and changing of the Indian cricket team.

To safeguard their interests the selectors should opt for some more transparency in the way they conduct their lobs. Being a little more media savvy, revealing the reasons behind decisions, and clearing up controversies as and when they occur could go a long way in clearing up their much tarnished public image.

Maybe as Sunil Gavaskar suggested recently, the selectors could hire the services of a press liasion officer. Some smart talk will certainly do the Indian cricket selectors no harm.

RUNNING INTO FORM

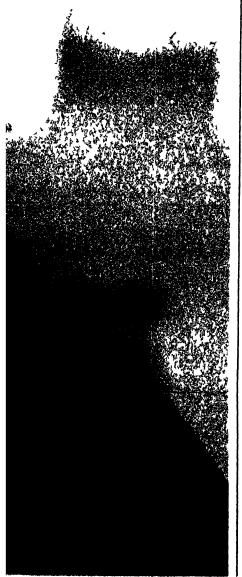
Criticised for making a comeback that did not sparkle, P.T.USHA has responded by winning 100 and 200m events at recent national level athletics meets. She is now poised to make an impact at the Asian level



BY RUPINDER SINGH

FTER P T Usha had become synonymous with gold medals in the Eighties, it was difficult for people to fathom her making a comeback to athletics. When she did, she finished a disappointing fourth in

The old and the new PT Usha sharing a joke with 200m World Championships silver medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe of Sri Lanka



the 200m at the National Games in Bangalore in 1997. Why was such a great athlete doing this to herself, her formerly adoring public asked in dismay? Usha, on the other hand, had a firm belief that she would be back where she had once belonged at the top

Throughout Usha's earlier career before her retirement, the most important factor in her rise had been her single-minded determination to do well. When Usha retired, got married and had a son, everyone thought Usha was lost to Indian sport. Usha's husband however had other ideas. He felt that Usha still had the potential to do well, he persuaded her to make a comeback.

"I have now proved that with concentration and involvement, I can still perform to the best of international standards"—P.T.Usha

Her husband had seen other married women athletes like distance runner Liz McColgan and 800m specialist Irina Masterkova make successful comebacks "Moreover if Linford Christie, Carl Lewis and Merlene Ottey achieved world class sprinting times at 35, why cannot Usha do it" he reasoned

The early years of the comeback were tough Usha, herself at times wondered whether she could make it back to the top

'While my husband kept telling me, I could be the best again, I really suffered when I raced and lost to athletes I could never imagine losing to However, his faith gave me the confidence to go on, she stated

Her husband's backing slowly
re-kindled P T Usha's famed
determination Once Usha was
focused, it was evident she could not
give up before she proved herself to be

the best again

Late last year was the turning point Starting from the South Asian Athletics in December in New Delhi when PT Usha was first in a photo-finish, edging out Rachita Mistry, she was back to her old winning days At the Open Nationals, she narrowly lost to Rosa Kutty in the 400m (she had a very creditable timing of 52 37 secs) but she was back to her winning ways at the Inter-State Athletics Championships in Bangalore, winning the 100m (11 56 secs a meet record) and the 200m (23 29 secs, her second best timing ever) She also won gold medals as a member of the 4x100 and 4x400m relay teams

"A lot of sacrifice and hard work had gone into my preparation in the last three months," Usha said in Bangalore, 'I am staying away from my family including my five year old son and am training in Patiala under coach Jaswinder Singh Bhatia I am thinking of nothing else but athletics

"I have now proved that with concentration and involvement, I can still perform to the best of international standards. I am steadily improving my 400m timings. I am sure that one day I will be able to race under 52 secs."

From her performance so far, it is quite clear that P T Usha is definitely going to be among the medals at the 1998 Asian Games at Bangkok What will now be interesting to watch is how Usha matches up to the Sri Lankan World Championships silver medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe and the Chinese women athletes who have further improved upon Usha stimings

Whether Usha will match up to their standards or not, there is one point that her comeback has definitely made—if you have the desire to succeed and have a single-minded determination, no one can stop you from reaching the top Usha's comeback should be taken as a reminder to aspiring women athletes of the country that they could become champion Asian level athletes if they are willing to focus on their careers

SO NEAR...AND SO FAR YET

VISHWANATHAN ANAND blew a great chance to become the World Champion when he lost the tie-breaker to Anatoly Karpov. But still. the future is bright



BY ANIEK PAUL

"To strive with difficulties and to conquer them is the highest human felicity, the next being to strive and deserve to conquer"—Samuel Johnson

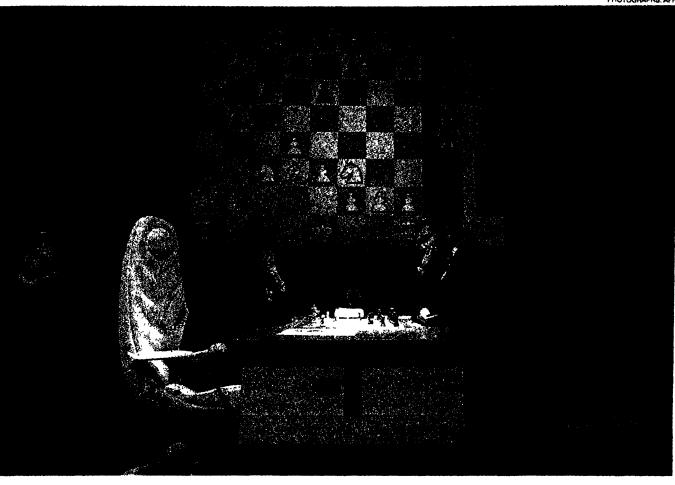
NLY with the above vision can we appreciate the greatness of Vishwanathan Anand's achievement, despite his loss in the World Championship final. It is not the result of the final that matters, because the rights and conditions of the two finalists were so different that it is impossible to take the result seriously Besides, the FIDE officials themselves admit the event does not necessarily determine the best player on the planet, though the name they gave it might suggest the contrary.

So that reduces at least this edition of the World Championship knock-outs to a mere experiment, and the success or failure of individual players is to be judged with extreme prejudice. The end result of Karpov winning the title and a million dollars with just one week's work certainly comes second to Anand's achievement of keeping his World Championships hopes alive when he won the sixth game and tied it at 3-3.

Even Michael Adams' feat of taking the Candidates Finals (or the semi-finals as they called it) to the

Anand is all concentration during the final. Sadly, a blunder in the tie-breaker cost him the title





The final at the Olympic Museum at Lausanne. Will Anand get another chance like this again?

sudden death is arguably a bigger achievement compared to Karpov's winning the title with just 8 games work against someone who played 31 games without rest in less than a month's time.

It is on account of this that professional chess players, including Anand, dismiss Karpov's title as one defended with unconquerable advantages, and hence unconvincingly. It is traditional for the world champion to have the better of unequal rights in the title contest, but this time it was outrageous. Karpov was seeded to the finals, while his challenger had to come through some 23 games in over three weeks time and continue without any rest.

The whole point of giving Karpov and Kasparov, the two world champions, seedings to higher rounds

was to overcome the rift in professional chess between Kasparov and the official system run by FIDE. But when Kasparov turned down the invitation, calling the format "farcical", they put Karpov straight into the finals. That was patently unfair although they have also decided that no one, including the new world champion, will be seeded no higher than round 2 from next time. This led Kramnik, Kasparov's protege, to withdraw. He felt that this gave Karpov more than 70% chance of winning the title. Former challenger Nigel Short appreciated his decision by calling him the only player to have any self-respect.

Yet, if Anand won the championship, the question of professional recognition of the FIDE title would have disappeared. But now that he self-destructed himself in the tie-breakers of the final, the rift has widened. So all eyes are now turned towards Kasparov who is

expected to come up with something more credible. Unless he does something fast, he will be forgotten just as people forgot Fischer.

Karpov has gone on record saying that Kasparov's situation is like Fisher's already. He is out of the official system; his resources and abilities to run an alternative cycle have depleted to near extinction following his loss to the computer, 'Deep Blue', which has seriously affected his image.

But if he manages to find funding for a legitimate event which the top players recognise as duly determining the best player, chess as a sport will probably benefit the most. And if we have some other winner of it than Karpov, it will bring the world of chess back to where it was.

The world of chess has seen the crisis of having two champions, the disappearance of sponsorships and likes, but maybe something worse is facing us, one world champion, one

world championship but no recognition.

As for money for future world championships, FIDE president Kirsan Iljumzhinov has guaranteed the next ten editions of the World Championship knockouts for US \$5 million each. It means we are not going to see World Championships played in some 'Burger King' in Jakarta City but it is bad for the image of the sport not to have any clear world champion.

Now, after enough digression, let's get back to the event we were discussing. It was one that proved that Anand was clearly the greatest, but just that the tie-breakers of the final proved to be his Achilles' heel. Even if Anand went on to win it, which he patently deserved, some people would have doubted his credibility anyway. Kramnik did not play, Kasparov turned down his invitation, his main contenders Ivanchuk, Topalov, Salov and Judith Polgar fell victim to the format and were eliminated early.

There are some people who say his campaign should have ended in round three in the hands of Alexander Khalifman but it was the invisible hand of God that kept his hopes alive. But all those who think so, are looking through the microscope upside down.

This was a new format, and indeed a very demanding one, for it required an immense amount of re-adjustments on the part of the players. The matches were short, the time controls were different and the rapid play-offs made it all the more unpredictable. But what was important was to adapt your playing styles to it, which none excepting. Anand managed to do convincingly. He was mostly equal to the task, but on a few occasions he was fighting with his back against the wall, but never actually gave up

For the luck factor, the best explanation comes from the instance of Kasparov's win in 1995. Had Anand been able to convert all the advantages he created in that match he would have been seeded to the finals this time, and Kasparov would

NO RESPECT GIVEN

Despite being a world champion for several years, ANATOLY KARPOV has not received the recognition he deserves

"Eminence without merit earns deference without esteem."—Sebastien-Roch Nicolas de Chamfort

HE above quote from a mediocre 18th century French playwright, well characterised the match between Vishwanathan Anand and Anatoly Karpov. It also defined the latter's position as a world champion.

Karpov is the most successful tournament player of all time, and has the outstanding distinction of being in the top five-rated players for 25 years. But somehow he seems to get the same level of respect given to a 60 kg sumo wrestler. So how is this possible? Why do people keep hearing he is a fraud, that he is no good any longer? What exactly is the case against him?

Exactly like this time, his victory has little professional recognition. A question of credibility has always hung over the world title he has held, particularly as he has never beaten any World Champion to take the title. Karpov became the World Champion when American Bobby Fischer refused to defend his title in 1975. The final Candidates Match of that cycle between Karpov and Victor Korchnoi was retroactively considered to be the World Championship and Karpov, its winner, was awarded the title. while Fischer was exiled for 20 years.

After holding the title for ten years including two successful defences against Korchnoi, Katpov lost it in 1985 to Gary Kasparov and failed to retake it in many subsequent matches. In a later

World Championship in Seville in 1987, he came extremely close to winning it back, but Kasparov won the last game of the match in a situation where only a win could have saved his title. In 1993, Karpov, it seemed, was ready for yet another shot at Kasparov but the English Grandmaster Nigel Short beat him in the Candidates semi-final. It was one of the biggest match upsets of Karpov's life, and in the history of the world championships as a whole.

But 1993 saw some dramatic events taking place. It ended up with Karpov winning the title back. Following Kasparov and Short's break-away from FIDE, an alternative match was arranged between Karpov and Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman, the other contestant Short had defeated on his way to meet the world champion.

Karpov flattened Timman for the FIDE World Chess title while actually losing 19 rating points—a fact that indicates why the title has always lacked credibility. Since then Karpov has kept his title, defending it successfully against American Gata Kamsky in 1996, and with the grotesque advantages here against Anand. So, Karpov has successfully defended his title a number of times, but has never taken it from anyone.

Besides, Karpov has had to deal with the most maligning accusations, from being a match-fixer, a dirty columnist, to being called a shrewd politician. They say Korchnoi's family was so intensely threatened during the match at Baguio City in 1978 that he had to give it up. They say his rapport with FIBE president.

Florencio Campomanes enabled him to cancel the 1984 match against Kasparov as he had begun to tire, and his title was threatened.

About his recent performances, It has been pointed out that he has not won a single tournament against the top 10 competitors, since his amazing victory at Linares in 1994. He has, however, tied for the top spot in some high-level tournaments, but when Kramnik, Anand, Topalov and company are in business, he does not quite manage to keep up the pace. Besides, in terms of rating too, he trails them all, placed sixth with 2735, having lost ten points over the last six months.

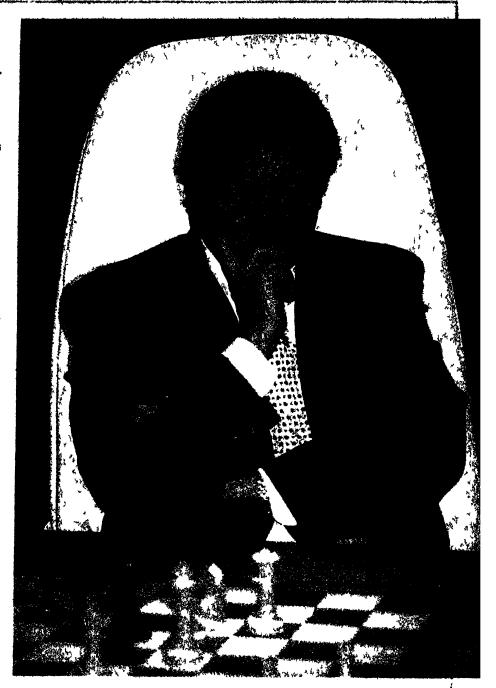
But all this has distracted us from viewing his amazing chess career

He is the top representative of his generation, which came after the strongest generation of chess players in history. The period between 1955 and 1965 saw players like Keres, Tal, Botvinnik, Geller, Bronstein, Smyslov, Petrosian, Gligoric, Polugaevsky, Spassky, Larsen, Fischer, Korchnoi, Portisch, Hort and Najdorf who were all capable of winning the world title.

Even the supposedly second-class Soviet Grandmasters like Kotov and Zaitsev were capable of winning the USSR Championship regarded in those days as the miniature World Championship.

But when Fischer disappeared. Karpov was largely alone at the top. The few players who might have been considered formidable as his competitors were all past their prime; only Korchnoi seemed to defy this theory. People of his generation like Timman, Huebner, Ribli, Ljubojevic, Andersson, Bellavsky and Miles never cost Karpov any sleep.

After dround 100 games, he has a staggering plus 23 against Thuman Anderson has besten him only once in some 40 games.



and Karpov has a 60% success rate against others from his age group. So, his main challengers until the emergence of Kasparov was drawn from the previous generation who were all ten to twenty years older than him. Karpov, obviously, had an edge.

On the other hand, the present generation of players—Kramnik, Ariand, Topaloy and company—is the strongest since the Fifties. That Karpov does not win as often as he did before, has to do as much with the high level of the recent group of players as it does with Karpov's age. Yet, with his near perfect technique and flawless defence, he continues to perform at the top level of chess quite respectably for his age.

have probably reached him in a wheelchair in the match in Lausanne What is important in chess is to keep a poker face, cheating your opponent of the valuable half point is no crime, the ability to do that is a virtue and that distinguishes the best from the rest

Anand showed that he had clearly

learnt a lot from his experience of previous world championships. It began from the third round and ended with his win in the final game of the match in Lausanne. His winning created the first precedent of a challenger beating the champion in the final game in a do-or-die situation.

The whole game, right from his choice of opening (the rarely played Trompovsky) to inducing Karpov to make the terrible blunder and the execution of the advantage was deeply commendable, since in spite of his grave situation, there was not the slightest hint of desperation. The fact

SECOND TO NONE

Both V.Anand and Anatoly Karpov had an interesting team of seconds to help them

HIS was Anand's second world championship final, and with the experience of more than half a dozen matches, he evidently knew the importance of preparation for the mega-event.

He got a reminder yet again in the very first game of his match against Karpov when a prepared opening shocker upset his homework, and he had to give in. In game 3, Karpov dug up more of his homework but this time it wasn't much successful. But anyway, Karpov is one who came to this world championship with the most extra-ordinarily vast experience of 257 world championship games, including three successful defenses of his title and a win against Anand in 1991. He certainly deserves respect and to play him in a title encounter demands a lot of preparation.

The most usual way of preparing is to hire some players, present or former and experienced trainers called 'seconds' in chess parlance, apart from fitness experts and even psychologists who assist in getting the player into the best shape physically and mentally. Every top player, right from the fifties, has had a team of his own, with the sole exception of Bobby Fisher who dismissed their role completely by saying. "I don't like seconds because I hate giving chess lessons."

In Fisher's imes, the seconds

were more important than they are today. They have the usual function of preparing the openings for the player (which these days may be more complex than what they used to be earlier, as more games are played now than before), plus the additional responsibility of analysing the games when they are adjourned while their boss gets some sleep.

These days games are played till they are finished, and though one function of the seconds has been cut off by the rules, their workload seems not to have been reduced by much. This new, dreadful knock-out formula has certainly made their masters lash their whips at them more frequently than ever before. Now you need a great amount of variety, and where could it come from except from the heads of the seconds, and the thirds, and the fourths...

Anand's seconds did a reasonably good job for him, which is evident from the fact that he beat the system well. Anand, who is ever so discreet about the choices he makes, made quite an interesting team for himself.

While retaining his long time friend and trainer Blizabar Ubilava (who keeps his laboratory in Madrid fuming all the time, so that he has nearly lost all his half;) and Artur Yusupov (the guy whom Anand keeps so tied up that he hasn't had time to share fit all the

years now), he also included 18-year-old Hungarian Grandmaster Peter Leko (to give him chess lessons?), dropping American Patrick Wolff and Jonathan Speelman

Leko, the most surprising recruit, was eliminated from this world championship innocuously in the very first round Formerly, he broke the world records of Fisher and Judith Polgar, to become the youngest Grandmaster in 1994, until it was re-written by Etienne Bacrot last year. Currently rated 2670, he is ranked 16th in the world now.

Yusupov is a player of immense experience, and still plays; he got to the third round in the knock-outs where he lost to Zoltan Almasi. Anand then mercilessly exacted revenge in round 4. Poor Almasi got a 2-0 bashing. Yusupov is a product of the school of the great Mark Dvoretsky, to which even Kasparov owes a lot.

Formerly with Kasparov's team, Yusupov is an asset to Vishy's team, for his great depth of knowledge in chess theories and power of analysis, though maybe he cannot use it for his own good very much. He is rated 2630, and since is slightly out of playing regular tournaments (due to his commitments to Anand's tight schedules), he is ranked 42nd in the world.

There isn't much to be said about Utiliava. He and Affand form one heliuve of a team, and though as a player hasn't done much himself, his importance as a ground staff is bestillastimed by the fact that he returned to have bestillastimed by the fact that he returned to have bestillastimed.

that Karpov had a crushingly good record against the Trompovsky, and had recently beaten Adams and Topalov's attempts to surprise him with it, gives an idea of Anand's immense self-belief.

These two matches, against Khalifman and Karpov displayed the

Anand himself spells danger to any player on earth, and backed by such a talented ream, he was a tough adversary. So Karpov extended his team of seconds to include even thirds and fourths. He came to Lausanne with four members: the experienced Viadimir Tukmakov and Mikhail Podgaets and the highly active players Alexander Onischuk and Jaan Ehlvest.

Grandmasters Ehlvest and Onischuk play a lot and are rated formidably (both 2610), and though the older members of the team, Tukmakov and Podgaets might have lost their tactical alertness because of a lack of competitive chess, their worth was in deciding strategies and analysing the openings played by the defending champion.

So while the players keep trying to outdo their opponent's work, the seconds work in the hotel room. So even though they might put in their best efforts, they cannot completely determine how well their man does. They have an advantage over their masters in the matter of financial returns from a match; the price of their service is always decided before.

Albert Toby, Anand's friend and psychologist from Holland, whispered in my ear after the match in 1995, 'Believe the, Anand's lost a lot of money, this time.' Anand, however, said in front of the TV cartieses. 'Lamples about the Large mimber of testing the end which excepting the lost a chickin. But was \$47.



Wife Aruna looks up at her husband after he won the sixth and final game to level the score, 3-3. Sadly, the next day was gloom for Aruna as Anand lost inexplicably

unnerving psychological strength of the Indian Grandmaster, and his survival up to the final regulation time game showed his extra-ordinary stamina, both physical and mental. Recent studies have shown that a session of tournament chess results in as much loss of energy as in a boxing bout of equal duration.

It is presumably impossible even for the likes of Mike Tyson and George Foreman to survive the kind of exhaustion Anand had to contend with. He was complaining of feeling tired right from the second game of the match against Gelfand in round 6, the quarter-finals, and had to play some 17 games after that.

Michael Adams was another player who seemed physically quite capable of enduring the hard format. His feat of winning the equal of an English lottery against Nigel Short, after playing Peter Svidler and Loek Van Wely to dead exhaustion, and subsequently holding Anand to eight straight draws was quite respectable. However, Boris Gelfand, on the other hand, who was one of the most experienced customers in the later rounds, was in no way equal to the task ever. He did not win a single regulation time game, winning all the matches up to round 5 in tie-breakers and meekly giving in to Anand 1.5-0.5 in round 6.

He was perhaps the luckiest of all

THE WAR GAME

Chess is not really placed or peaceful as it appears on the surface

HE natural attitude of the individual towards his fellow men" wrote Alexis Carrell "is one of strife."

That may be why chess has such an attraction for the human mind. It is war but a safe and playful one.

But for men who sit across a table, a chess set separating them, it is not merely a game. It is a matter of life and death and the desire to win is intense.

There is a strange attraction for the game of chess. It is similar to the attraction we feel for a great painting—an exquisitely simple game to learn and play and yet so very alluringly complex. Even a child can play the game, but in a world class championship, the complexities that unfold during the course of a game, can leave one amazed and stunned.

Chess, as a game, has lasted for thousands of years. It originated in India and used to be played by the comtemplative Hindus. Later on, it went across Persia into the West.

Today, chess is played all over the world and in Russia, it is an extremely popular sport.

It has always puzzled non-chess playing people how such a simple game attracts so much of loyalty and devotion. Ernest Jones, a psychologist and the official biographer of Sigmund Freud, studied chess and chess players in general. He came to a startling conclusion.

According to him, chess is a

game of symbolism. The king represents the father, while its most savage attacker, the queen, represents the mother. This, says Jones, has a similarity to the family in which the mother is pitted against the father.

But nowadays, most psychologists discount the sexual symbolism theory. They argue that if the theory is correct, most of the great players should have come from unhappy, conflict-ridden families. But that is not true. Most top players have come from normal, happy families without any emotional conflict between the parents.

In fact, a study of chess champions have noted major dissimilarities among renowned champions:

Emmanuel Laskar who was the World Champion from 1894 to 1912 was a philosopher and a mathematician. The satisfaction he derived from chess was purely intellectual.

On the other hand topph Capablanca from Cutta (World Champion, 1921-27) was a rake and enjoyed other games like bridge, tennis and allegedly the pursuit of women.

Another champion, with a different character, was Alexander Alekhine (1927-35, 37-46) who has been described by psychologist Reuben Fine as the 'sadist of the chess world'. He married five times, was an Anti-Semite and an

alcoholic. But most other chess stalwarts, including Anatoly

Karpov, lead a clean life, devoting most of their time and energy to chess.

It is a game that reveals the innate characteristics of an individual. For example, in Russia, the players who grew up during the reign of the Czars, were romantic in nature like Alexander Alekhine.

But later on, under the Communist regime, most players tended to concentrate on establishing strong defensive positions, which reflected a national feeling of threat.

Certainly, the Russian champions since 1948, seldom launched an attack early in their games. They preferred to win by attrition and a late counter-attack, as Karpov normally does.
Consciously or not, this could be a re-enactment of Napoleon's 1812 campaign and the second World War in which Hitler's blitzkrieg fell to Russian doggedness.

Furthermore, Soviet players seem to be more willing than most, to settle for a draw, which gains them half a point, rather than go all out and risk a loss.

Perhaps, one of the most compelling reasons why chess is so attractive is that it is truly a great leveller. Status, position, or wealth does not confer any singular advantage. Only your grey cells, a phenomenal memory and the gift of precise logical thinking matters in the final analysis.

Shevlin Sebastian

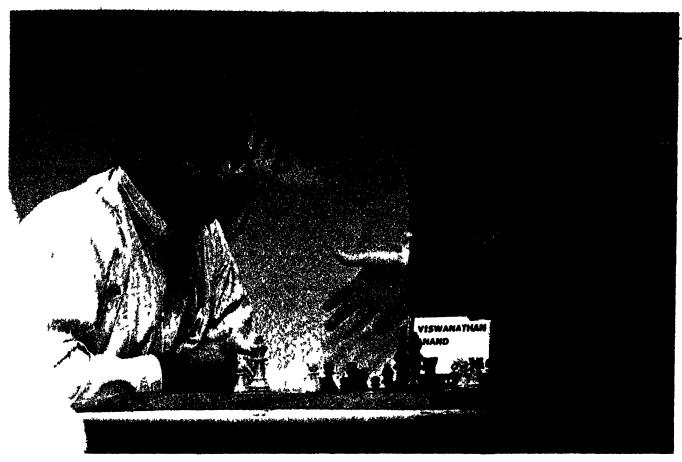
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the quarter-finalists, while the more experienced and formidable Vassily Ivanchuk, Vaselin Topalov, Judith Polgar and Valery Salov got edged out in rounds 2-3 due to complete confusion as to how to improvise. All this indicates how very challenging the nature of the contest was, and had

it not been for the unfair advantages granted to Karpov, what a world champion this Championships would have determined—the most energetic, the most cunning and the most cautious, all in one person. Could we call him the most capable man, and chess the most masculine

sport? Oh, that's probably a sexist comment!

It was certainly interesting for the people standing by the wings, particularly those with big ideas about the next time, to see how the players negotiated the new format, which at the beginning seemed so suspect and



unpredictable Karpov said that the one who reaches Lausanne would either be the luckiest or the best prepared or, in the sense, the most capable Anand proved it is the capable who survives this format But the contest also proved that chess is not best served by being like football or tennis, though this might attract more sponsorship and advertising

The short matches, the tiring schedule, the idiotic tie-breaking rules this format introduced breaking the hundred year plus tradition, produced a miserably poor quality of chess. This makes it clear that longer matches and properly rested players produce a better quality of chess. But sadly, this new format will continue, contrary to the popular expectation that something altogether new will replace it

FIDE has assured everyone that through this experiment they have identified its faults, and the future editions will be designed so that nobody has an undue advantage What certainly reassures them about this format is Anand's winning the knockouts, which shows it is not altogether a "lottery" as he had called it before

Michael Adams stretches out a congratulatory hand to Anand after he loses in the tie-breaker in the semi final

Anand is increasingly emerging as a player whose rate of improvement is quite threatening (his every tournament shows at least a marginal improvement over the last) and he knows how to maintain the balance between learning performing and using his learning in his performance. So in spite of the demanding tournament schedules, still not as bad as cricket though, Anand manages time for extensive homework before every major event.

The idea he employed to beat the knockout formula was to bring in a lot more flexibility and variety than we have seen before. The advantage of it was that he managed to keep his opponents guessing and none excepting Karpov could trip him up with any premeditated plan.

Anand is certainly going to use his experience of this time in the coming editions, and his preparation for this tournament will be invaluable to the ones he plays subsequently. But nevertheless, he is the second player in the history of chess to have lost to two different world champions in less

than three years the first being Botvinnik in the late fifties

Anand himself admits that losing a world championship is always very difficult to negotiate with. It requires a player to make a lot of readjustments to survive it. We have the example of Short who took a lot of time to recover from his loss to Kasparov in 1993, although he hasn t made a significant mark after that Anand who seemed not to have had much trouble getting back to the circuit following his loss in 1995 says he got over his disappointment by deciding to give himself some space, by staying away from tournaments and his laboratory for a while and got back without any major ideas for the time being Things went well and Anand was soon back in business

This loss though, might have had much stronger impressions on him, but is likely to have relatively little or no bearing at all. As Anand says. I would like to remember it as winning a very strong tournament. That is not exaggerated at all, and if Anand can truly overlook the fact that he blew the best opportunity to win the world chess title, he should not have much difficulty continuing the way he is.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

MOHAMMED

HABIB

Meet the tireless medio and an Arjuna Awardee who used to strike terror in the hearts of his opponents

ROM the by-lanes of Hyderabad to the lush green lawns of the Tata Football Academy, Jamshedpur, Mohammed Habib sure has come a long way In fact, it has been one hell of a journey for Habib, mostly through the slush of the Calcutta Maidan

where he spent the best part of his illustrious career

If there is one thing about Habib which strikes you most is his honesty and dedication. Anybody who has

Giving a pep-talk to the boys in the Academy ground

played with him or followed his career closely will tell you about his never-say-die attitude on the field

Technically, he may not have been a role model for youngsters, but what he lacked in this respect, Habib more than made up with his guts and gumption. In many ways, Habib was a



natural ball player.

A tireless medio in the attacking mould, Habib used to strike terror in the hearts of his opponents with his sudden bursts of speed or a telling through which, more often than not, snatched a draw or a win from the jaws of a defeat.

His first steps in the game were taken in the city of Charminar and it was not before 1966 when Habib arrived at the Mecca of Indian football—Calcutta. The Maidan sharks (agents of Big Three clubs) had spotted Habib's undoubted talents and lured him away with the promise of a glorious future.

East Bengal was Habib's first club in Calcutta though subsequently he went on to play for Mohun Bagan as well as Mohammedan Sporting with distinction.

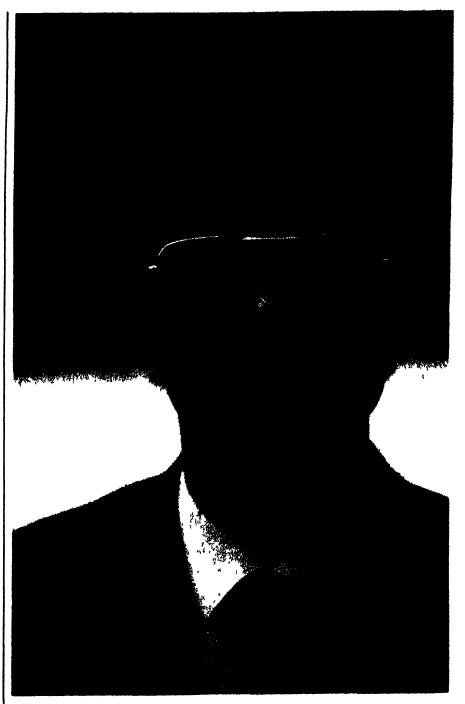
In fact, after a couple of seasons with East Bengal, Habib moved to Mohun Bagan in 1968-69. However, he switched back to the red and yellow colours in 1970-71 and was part of the outfit during the early Seventies considered to be the golden period in the club's history.

In 1975-76, Habib changed colours again, albeit to Mohammedan Sporting's black-and-white to which he returned again in 1978-79 after a couple of years with Bagan.

In the fitness of things, it was with East Bengal that Habib ended his career in 1981-82 after playing "professionally" for 14 years. However, the end was not as pleasant as Habib would have liked.

In fact, one of Habib's biggest regrets in life is that he was "dropped" along with Sudhir Karmakar by coach Amal Dutta for the derby clash with Mohun Bagan. But that is history. It hardly takes away anything from Habib's glittering career during which he also went on lead the national team.

Habib's international debut was in 1965 in the Asian Youth Cup in Tokyo. As a senior, his first outing was in the Merdeka Cup in 1967. Habib was also a part of the Indian team which won bronze in successive Asian Games in 1970 and 1974 in Bangkok and Teheran, respectively. In



Habib's best moment in life came when Pele embraced him after the exhibition tie between Cosmos and Bagan at the Eden Gardens

between, Habib played in the pre-Olympic meet in Rangoon

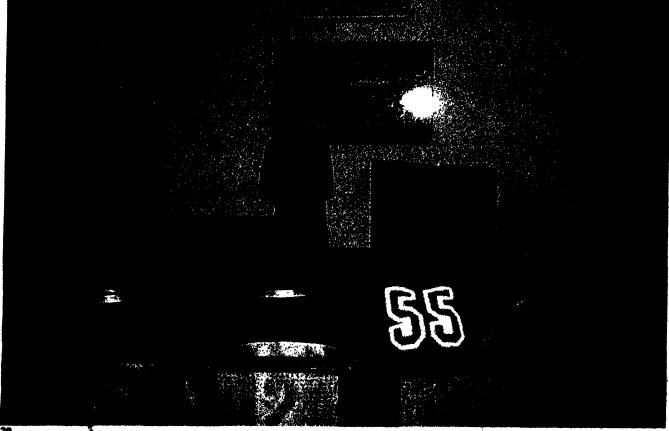
Habib was decorated with the Arjuna Award in 1980-81. But, for Habib, his best moment in life came when King Pele embraced him after the exhibition match between Cosmos and Mohun Bagan in 1977. "It was easily the biggest moment in

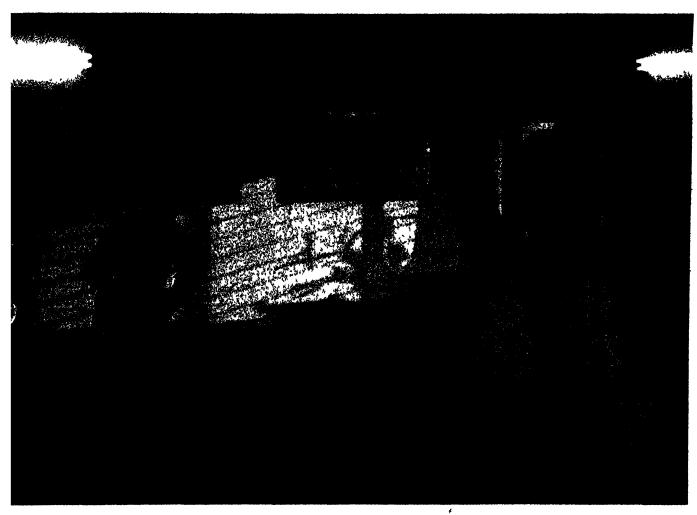
my life. Most of us have only read about Pele's exploits or seen some of the matches on video.

"I consider myself extremely fortunate that I was able to play against him in an exhibition match. And mind you, it was competitive enough.

"After the match, Pele came up and hugged me for my efforts against his club. It was the ultimate honour for me—to be lauded by someone who is







considered to be the greatest player the world has ever known. The memories of that moment I will take it to my grave," Habib recollects fondly.

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After he quit playing, Habib enrolled himself with the NIS for a diploma in coaching. In 1985, he joined the TFA which was launched with much fanfare the next year. Life for Habib, who will be celebrating his 50th birthday next year, at the Academy more or less follows a set pattern. "I have to be with the boys so I have to follow the same routine as has been chalked out for them."

An average day for Habib begins at around 5.30 am. After Namaz and a cup of tea, he isoff to the Academy. From 6.30 to 9.30 am he is with the boys at the ground, teaching them the basics. Then, after a quick shower and change of clothes he sits down with the cadets at breakfast.

From 10.30 to 12.30 he attends to

Habib takes time off to hone his TT skills with a trainee

paperwork in the office. He rides his scooter back home for lunch.

He is back at the ground at 4 pm for some practice with the boys. The evening sessions last two hours.

Once in a week, Habib takes theory classes for the pupils who are also shown video clippings of particular matches or moves to help them improve their game. Habib has made it a point to videotape all TFA's matches in major tournaments so that it can be played back to the boys when they come back to the Academy. "It makes a lot of sense. It is not enough for me to tell a defender where he went wrong. I use the video to show him how he went wrong," says Habib.

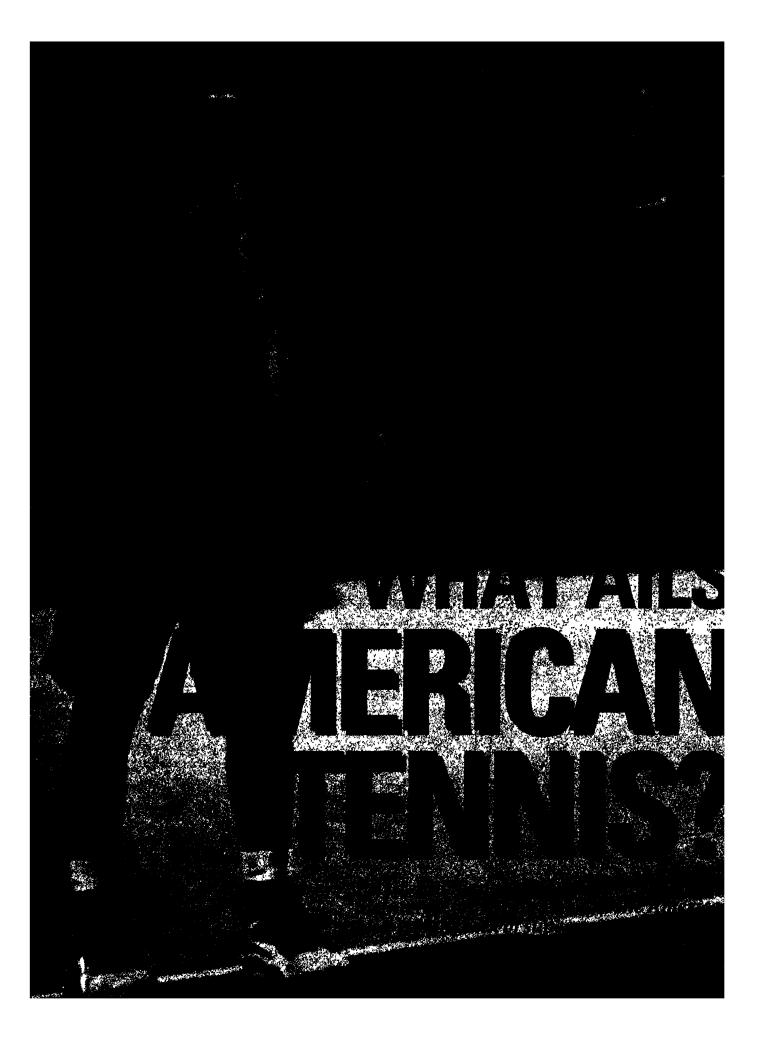
In the evening, he occasionally joins the boys for a swim or a game of

table tennis by way of relaxation. The rest of the evening is spent with the family when they are around. "Otherwise, I read some books, watch a little TV, say my prayers, have my dinner and go to bed by 10 pm."

A very religious person, Habib says his Namaz five times a day no matter whether he is at the Academy or away on tour with the boys. "Whatever I have got or achieved in life it is because of Allah's wishes," Habib says with all humility.

Still fit, Habib still has a lot to offer to Indian football. "My greatest satisfaction is that so many of my pupils have gone on to play for India. It is my humble contribution to a game which has given me everything in life," says Habib with a voice choked with emotion as he bids adieu and rides away to begin another day.

Sumit Mukherjee PHOTOGRAPHS SRINIVAS



N early 1987 Arthur Ashe warned "While tennis is booming in Germany Argentina, Australia and France, the sport is in deep trouble in the U S Our base of good players is eroding If nothing's done the bottom is going to drop out of the top after McEnroe and Connors

America's slide as a tennis power continued—and worsened with Chris Evert s retirement in 1989—but that was not the case with the men's section In successive years the new generation of stars Michael Chang (1989 French Open), Pete Sampras (1990 U.S. Open), Jim Courier (1991 French Open) and Andre Agassi (1992 Wimbledon) soon smashed through with Grand Slam triumphs All except for Chang who is endowed with less talent and size, ranked No 1 while Sampras emerged as the undisputed superstar of the 1990s

However no resurgence even remotely comparable took place in women's tennis in America Although top-tenners Jennifer Capitati and Lindsay Davenport captured gold medals at the 1992 and 1996 Olympics respectively no born-in-the-USA female has won a Slam title since Evert, then 31 at Roland Garros in 1986 Fortunes have plummeted so low that only one American 25-year-old Mary Joe Fernandez reached the French Open quarterfinals in 97 And for the first time since 1913 no American woman found a place in the Wimbledon quarterfinals

Echoes of Ashe's dire warning came from Sampras after he cruised to his fourth Wimbledon and tenth overall major title. The thing that concerns me is after we're done. There's really not another young American coming up right now pointed out Sampras. 'So I think the Americans are going to have to enjoy what they have right now because I really don't see anyone coming up to do what Andre, Michael and I have done."

Clear-eyed Sampras is no Cassandra One stark fact tells it all no American man aged 23 or younger





ranks in the world's top 100 The rising stars at recent Grand Slam tournaments—1996 French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov (23), 1997 Australian Open runner-up Carlos Moya (20) and 1997 French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten (20) —all were spawned in foreign lands The same holds true for other young hotshots like Marcello Rios (21), Mark Philippoussis (20) Magnus Norman (21), surprise Wimbledon quarterfinalist Nicolas Kiefer (20) and Tommy Haas (19) Noted coach Nick Bollettieri raves that Haas ' has the potential to be as good as, or better than any player ever to come out of the academy And that includes Andre Agassi

Ah yes, whatever happened to the garishly attired, frosted blond, shaggy-haired God-learing (he often avowed that religion was his highest priority) Las Vegas heartthrob, the flamboyant rebel without a cause except perhaps for a fanatical father who overdosed him on tennis and for a tennis academy he hated?

Too often Agassi was sidetracked by endorsements—like a reported \$100 milion Nike deal and the ironically famous 'Image is everything 'Canon camera commercial—his fleet of cars, jet airplane, general sloth and laziness and gorgeous actress Brooke Shields But when he was focused and winning, he fired up interest in tennis more than anyone in the past ten years especially among youngsters

Although underachieving Andre was upset in his first three Grand Slam finals, he grabbed championships at Wimbledon (1992), the U S Open (1994) and the Australian (1995) He also cupped the gold medal at the weak-fielded Atlanta Olympics, and unlike other less-patriotic American stars, nearly always played Davis Cup and racked up a splendid 24-4 singles record

But a tough four-set loss to Sampras in the 1995 U.S. Open final joited Andre's fragile psyche. Not even savvy coach and motivator Brad. Gilbert could revitalize his passion to compete for the next two years. How

COLORSPORT

top tennis players have changed!
After ultimate warrior Connors lost to arch rival Bjorn Borg at Wimbledon in 1978, he solemnly vowed: "I'll follow the S.O.B. (Borg) to the ends of the earth. Everywhere he turns, he'll see my shadow."

Instead of redoubling his commitment and chasing Sampras, Agassi played halfheartedly in 1996 Australian and U.S. Open semifinal losses to Michael Chang and inexcusably skipped the first three Grand Slams in 1997. His disappearing act robbed tennis of exactly what it needs most: a compelling, continuing rivalry and a charismatic star.

While a champion doesn't have to be controversial, like the 1970s and '80s bad boys Connors and McEnroe's, to be interesting, American kids just aren't turned on by the placid Sampras. Tony Trabert, a sporting champion from the more innocent 1950s believes society, and not Sampras, should be blamed for that

"He's being criticized for not being more colourful. But you don't need to be a buffoon to be a great champion," stresses Trabert, now a TV tennis analyst for CBS and ESPN. "If some people think he is boring, how do they describe Rod Laver, Bjorn Borg, Arthur Ashe, Stan Smith and Don Budge? They minded their business, made no scenes and yet were special champions They weren't big stories because they went out late with prostitutes or got caught driving drunk or bit somebody's ear off. If Roseanne Barr is the most-watched television show in America, that tells us that we really have gone downhill."

Even so Tiger Woods's engaging personality and ready smile have ignited a worldwide golf boom, while tennis' popularity in America has leveled off, at best, during Sampras's reign. "There is no question it would be a plus if Pete were more outgoing," acknowledges Trabert. "But Pete is not a bubbly, quirky kind of guy who will give you a lot of great quotes."

Tennis and golf have long played second fiddle to baseball, baseketball

and football on the American sports scene, and likely always will. However, with the advent of Open Tennis in 1968, the tie breaker in 1970, increased TV coverage of major tournaments and the wildly entertaining Billie Jean King-Bobby Riggs "Battle of the Sexes" extravaganza in 1973, tennis' popularity as a participation and spectator sport skyrocketed to all-time highs in the mid-and late-1970s. "There has never been a sports explosion in this country to compare with the tennis explosion," wrote Herbert Warren Wind in his 1979 book. Game. Set and Match.

Pam Shriver grew up and developed her game during that

exciting era and gained the U.S.Open final in 1978 as a 16-year-old prodigy. She believes we must look back to those "Tennis Boom" years to understand America's tennis decline today.

"Tennis caught on then as a trendy, thing-to-do sport. People were playing tennis not because the infrastructure was there, but because tennis was cool," recalls Shriver. "There were wonderful stars like Billie Jean King, Chris Evert and Jimmy Connors, and the Australians. It was the golden era of professional tennis, and people were caught up in the aura of the sport."

From 5.5 million tennis players reported in a 1960 census through 10

ACTION PLUS A great champion, but with his squeaky clean. image Pete Sampias does not excluding to riamillion players based on a 1970 Nielsen survey the Tennis Boom created 19 2 million Americans who played tennis more than three times a month by 1996 according to another Nielsen report. Other surveys put the total figure at 30 million players or even more. Americans bought three times as many tennis balls in 1979 as in 1970 the approximately 50 indoor tennis clubs in 1960 burgeoned to 1 500 by 1979 and tennis televised by the three commercial national networks grew from only two percent of the total time allotted to sports in 1971 to 13 percent by 1976

Every trend, every boom gets back to reality—explains Shriver—Once tennis returned to reality—it needed the programs and the leagues and the grass - roots system to hold on to a strong core playing group—And that s what we didn t have then The USTA was slow to recognise it—slow to build the infrastructure

Shriver believes that the USTA's growing affiliation with local parks and recreation departments and with school systems' especially elementary schools, will help capture young players. You need to get kids 6 to 10 caught on to tennis instead of soccer. Once you do that, the pool of players is much bigger and then within ten years it's so much easier to produce top players in a player development program.

Whatever the debatable reasons the USTA Player Development Program which was created in 1987 to restore America's former tennis supremacy has failed to produce new stars with the notable exception of Davenport Despite the USTA's 120 regional training centers around the country and a state of the-art national training center in Key Biscayne Florida Trabert says At the moment you can trate it (the PDP) very well. We respending a lot of money (\$3.6 million this year) but obviously we're missing something somewhere

Robert Lansdorp a highly regarded junior coach who has guided Fracy Austin Justin Gimelstob and Davenport told *Inside Tennis* that the PDP is a fiasco. They

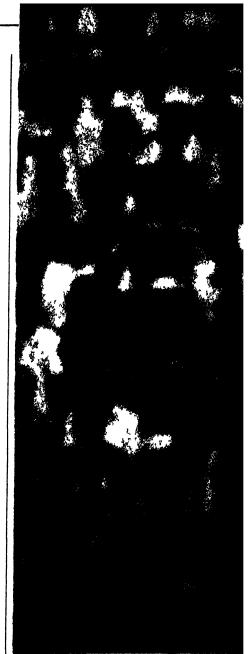
haven t developed anybody in the last seven years. They ruin more kids than they help. Critical of the national team setup, where the leading juniors travel with and are coached by USTA staffers. I ansdorp charges, 'They are trying to destroy the relationship amongst the player, the coach and the parents.

Nick Bollettieri whose proposals have often been rebuffed by the USTA ithinks that the solution is to develop minorities in the inner cities and he wants to do it himself. Ashe used to aver that if blacks were given a chance they would take over 'tennis just as they ve dominated many other sports.

Trabert isn t convinced though
Just because we build courts and
work with kids in the inner city
doesn t mean we re going to get back
up on the tennis map he says. Kids
in the inner city want to put two
hoops up and play basketball and try
to be Michael Jordan. There aren't
many who want to be Arthur Ashe."

Instant gratifiction, Trabert contends is much of what's wrong with American tennis. He d like to get rid of the 10 12,14 16 and 18 and under age divisions for sanctioned tournament competition 'because those categories make the parent the kid and the coach happy The 12-year-old kid can win with a good forehand and a litle running, and everybody shappy The 14-year-old with better legs a forehand and a little bit of a serve can win But when he finally gets up in the big league he doesn't have a complete game and he can t beat anybody. So he disappears '

Trabert recommends that the USTA restore the 15-and-under and 18-and-under categories that were discontinued 35 years ago 'Then you get pretty good up to 15 and maybe win (the national junior champonships at) Kalamazoo—which I never did—and then at 16 you move up and play 18-year-olds They beat your brains out, and you think Wow! I ve got a lot of work to do So you continue to try to impove your game, and you become a well rounded player That's not the



way it is now "

Interestingly, the ambitious
Sampras both opted for the
well-rounded game and decided not
to coast against beatable opposition in
his own age group Instead, he
'played up' against older, bigger and
better players, a challenge that
undoubtedly helped him reach his
tremendous potential

Easy money also induces instant gratification "The problem is that when kids get started and they make some money, it may be more money than they thought existed in the world, depending on where they came from," says Trabert "They get complacent They start out hungry,



but after a little success, they say, 'Gee, this is neat 'And they don't want to work hard enough to move further up the ladder "

During Wimbledon, former three-time champion and NBC tennis analyst McEnroe declared "I'm personally embarrassed by the sport, I'm embarrassed by the lack of interest in the sport"

This Mac Attack was on target The miserable 2 4 rating for Sampras's lopsided victory in the Wimbledon men's singles final was the lowest ever. Although the final did feature a few exciting rallies and not merely a succession of aces and putaway volleys, it's easy to agree with

Courier's contention that "Our tennis is incredibly boring (on grass)" Any sport faces big trouble when it presents its worst performances at it's most prestigious annual event

Lack of rallies, finesse and strategy on clay at Roland Garros couldn t explain why NBC recorded an all-time low French Open rating of 1.7. Here the terrible TV ratings both caused and reflected the "malaise" McEnroe decried. As Evert noted about the final between likeable but unknown Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten and colourless Spaniard Sergi Bruguera, "Who is there to root for?"

Unless a star captures the sporting public's imagination, the masses

won't watch pro tennis on TV or go to tournaments But if the masses don't get fired up about the sport, the shrinking grass-roots base will yield few, if any, champions

Even if this vicious cycle ends, the good old days of American tennis superiority may never return. The rest of the world has caught up with us, and with quality programs and new facilities and tournaments sprouting up from Uruguay to Uzbekistan, new talent will surely emerge, too

When asked if she could save
American tennis, 17-year-old black
phenom Venus Starr Williams replied
"I think so" Let's hope she s not a star
in name only

45

PROFESSIONALISM WONTHEDAY BYPRAMILA BHAT

Australia lifted the women's World Cup trophy, living up to their tag of favourites. As for India, even though they lost in the semi final, the future looks bright

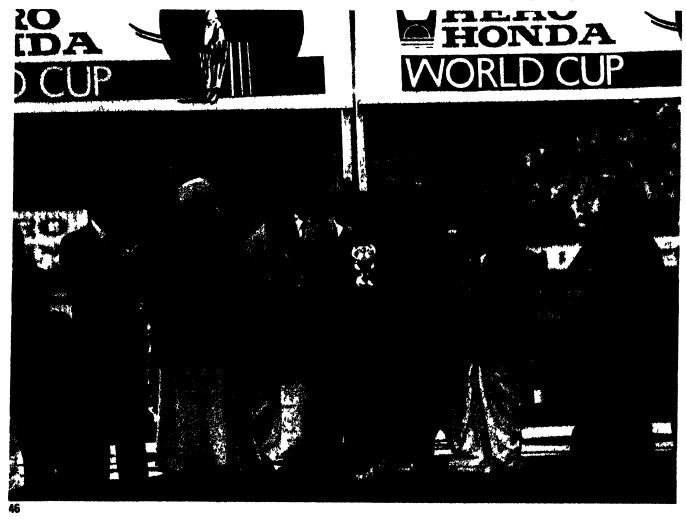
HE World Cup ended in triumph for the Aussies The Belinda Clark led Australians proved worthy of the pre World Cup tag of being the favourites Their sheer professionalism was evident by the way they demolished the lesser teams in the league stage. They also showed

their composure while playing India and New Zealand in the semi-final and final respectively. During the course of the World Cup-the Aussie captain created quite a few records. Notable among them was the fastest

Belinda Clark, the captain of Australia, receiving the World Cup from Chief Minister Jyoti Basu

century and the mammoth 229 against Denmark She is undoubtedly the best batswoman in the world today

The New Zealanders, on the other hand, finished runners-up once again Sadly, in the previous World Cup they also ended up being runners-up to England This time,





The New Zealand team members accompanying dancers during the closing ceremony

they had veteran Webbie Hockley to carry them through thick and thin in their batting while Katrina Witters proved her all-round abilities. Mention must be made here of the Kiwis who tied the match against us. They held their wits till the end, to force a remarkable result. This was the first-ever tie in any of the World Cups till now. England, winners of the previous edition proved to be a disappointing lot, compared to their earlier performance. Their standard has definitely hit a low in the absence of Carol Hedges and Jo Chamberlain. though they have got a player for the future in young Charlotte Edwards. She'll definitely serve England for a long time.

Coming to India's performance it

Belinds Clark had a very impressive tournament. She scored the fastest century and a mammeth 220 against Denmark

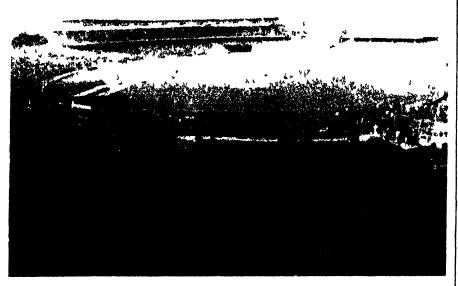


was one of mixed feelings. The very first match against Sri Lanka was washed out. In the remaining matches against the West Indies and the Netherlands, we weren't very impressive, though we won.

Apart from this, we were deprived of the full quota of 50 overs due to bad weather which followed us everywhere we played. This prevented our batswomen from compiling big scores. Against New Zealand, poor batting towards the end and the needless runouts proved disastrous. This was one match which we should have won convincingly instead of being part of history. We had an easier quarter final against South Africa but again put pressure on ourselves by losing five wickets in chasing 80 odd runs.

In the semi-final against Australia, bad weather once again proved to be a villain. The match was reduced to 32 overs. We bowled and fielded brilliantly, to restrict the high flying





Amazingly, 60,000 spectators turned up for the final because the Left Front government had arranged free transport

Aussies to 123 We were in for a shock before we started batting when the umpires reduced the number of overs to 30

The Aussies with their left and right combination, wasted precious time by shifting the sightscreen practically after each and every delivery. Those two overs and poor running between the wickets once again, led to our exit from the World Cup. It was a golden opportunity lost but certainly there is scope for improvement. There are various areas where we can emulate the other teams, especially the professional approach of the Aussies, for example

The Australian and New Zealand teams on the podium after the completion of the final

While the bowling carried us through in all the matches the batting sadly let us down. If only the batswomen let the bat do all the talking!

We need to have at least two specialised batswomen who can stay and get big scores in the top and middle order instead of all-rounders We have mostly bowlers who can bat a bit instead of batswomen who can bowl a bit

The future certainly looks good for the Indian team and the sport in particular which can be gauged by the fact that almost 60 000 people watched the final and thoroughly enjoyed it We had good support in all the places we played We certainly have the talent which, if rightly harnessed, can serve Indian women's cricket better

Overall, the World Cup was a big success and the credit goes to the Women's Cricket Association of India (WCAI) for their good show against all odds

PHOTOGRAPHS ASHOKE CHAKRABARTY

Bhat is the captain of the Indian women's cricket team

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

comfortable hotels. Gill has also been criticised for arbitrary selection of team officials for foreign trips.

The next chapter IHF Balance Sheet is also unique. Based on 25 parameters such as camp facilities, provision of kit, selection, promotion of domestic and junior hockey, Arumugam awards 130 marks to Gill out of 300 a mere 44%. This chapter shows that adhocism and nepotism

TITLE: KUBER HOCKEY YEAR

BOOK, 1998

AUTHOR: SHANTI K.

ARUMUGAM

PUBLISHER: READ AND WRITE

PAGES: 170 PRICE: Rs.500

HROUGH the passing years, India has enjoyed more international success in hockey than in any other sport. Yet surprisingly, these successes have not evoked an outpouring of biographies or autobiographies or an overflow of hockey literature. To Hell' With Hockey, a biography by Aslam Sher Khan and Golden Hat-trick by Balbir Singh (Sr) are the only two well-known biographies easily available. Indian football is ably chronicled in regional languages, Bengali and Malayalam. However, literature on Indian hockey in regional languages is scant.

The Kuber Year Book, paintstakingly compiled and written by hockey buff Shanti Arumugam, is a welcome addition to hockey literature. The author's perseverance deserves compliments. As hockey does not enjoy mass popularity in India, no publishing house was willing to publish this raeticulously researched book. The author spent six months trying to procure a sponsor. Finally, Pradyuman Kumar Sharma, chairman of the Kuber Group (which sponsored the 1996 Champions Trophy at Chennai)came to the rescue and sponsored the book.

There are ten different sections, each dealing with various aspects of Indian hockey, ranging from domestic Bangalore, but officials resided in

Aslam Sher Khan (extreme left) releasing the book. Others in the picture are P.K.Sharma (centre) Chairman, Kuber Group and Jt.Secy. HRD Ministry, S.Satyamurthi. (Inset) The author Shanti K.Arumugam

and international tournament results to detailed analysis of the state of Indian hockey in this book. The aim is to promote and popularise the sport in India. As part of its promotional drive, the author ensured that cash awards for the best players (men and women) and organiser were given during the official book release. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) sponsored these awards which are to become an annual feature.

The most fascinating chapters are "Hollow Promise. Slow Progress politicking". It is not just a critique of Gill's regime. Arumugam shows that the historic efforts of selling the game to television and business houses did not percolate down to the players. He cites an instance of how despite a generous budget of Rs.60 lakhs, players stayed in dormitories during the 1997 Senior Nationals at Bangalore, but officials resided in

still prevails in Indian hockey to the detriment of the game.

The chapter on the Pre-Olympic match-fixing scandal shows how India's prestige was tarnished. India became the first nation to achieve this dubious distinction in international hockey. There is verbatim reproduction of the FIH, IHF, Malaysian and Canadian hockey federations reports on this unseemly controversy.

This year book is a labour of love by the author, is a solitary effort and so spelling and syntax errors have crept in. However, overall it is an apt social chronicle of Indian hockey. One hopes that Arumugam can maintain his enthusiasm and continue to produce these information

Novy Kapadia

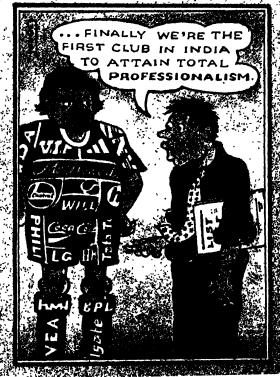
EJOTIN THE MOULE

GOPAL SARKAR focuses on some of the incidents of the National Football League









PEADERS' UIZ

QUESTIONS

Name the Indian
player to have batted
in all positions from No 1 to
No 10

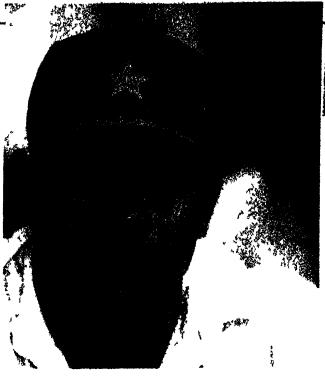
2. Who has captained India in the maximum number of Tests

Where and against whom did India play their first Test match?

Which Indian
cricketer has more
wickets to his name than
runs in Test cricket?

5. 'Mankading' what exactly would you be doing?

Answer to Question No.4



Answer to Question No.6

Name the only player to complete a hattrick with three lbw decisions

If the ball in play touches a helmet kept on the ground behind the wicket-keeper by the fielding side, what would be the umpire's decision?

8 . Is the batsman given out if a catch is taken

by a fielder off a rebound from another fielder's helmet?

"I was the captain of the England cricket team and had also made my name as an accomplished violenist." Who am I?

10. How many players have captained India in only one Test?

Which cricket ground in the world was the first to have light towers built for day-night cricket?

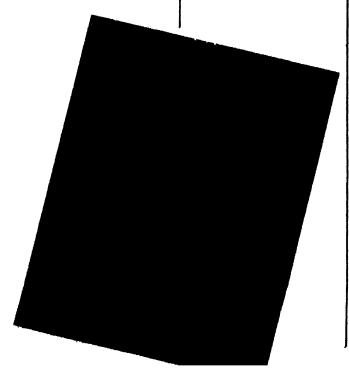
ANSWERS

- 1. Vinoo Mankad.
- 2. Sunil Gavaskar. 47 Test matches,
- 3. Against England at Lord's, 25-28 June 1932.
- 4. B.S. Chandrashekhar. 242 wickets; 167 runs: 58 Tests.
- 5. You would run out the non-striker before, delivering the ball. It was named after Vinco Mankad.
- 6. Aquib Javed.
- 7. The umpire would award five runs to the batting side.
- 8. No, the batsman is not out.
- 9. Tony Lewis.
- 10. Four. Hemu Adhikari, Chandu Borde, Pankaj Roy and Ravi Shastri.
- 11. The Sydney cricket ground.





All answers are sent in by the contributor. Readers are requested to sent in at least 20 questions and answers accompanied by a passport size colour photograph with their quiz.



If Azharuddin dazzles you with his brilliant wrist-play, then Tendulkar serves you a feast of stroke play. Ideal examples for wannabe batsmen

success is totally determined by the effort that is put into the endeavour. It is not by chance that a player of the caliber of an Imran, a Gavaskar, a Border, or a Miandad sustains his excellence over a long period. In this article we are going to look at the factors that make dropouts, as well as stars and superstars.

To become an international

'N cricket, as in life, the amount of

To become an international superstar, in cricket, is a five-stage process. Each stage has its requirements and one cannot go to the next stage before one has fulfilled the requirements for that stage. Once fulfilled, these become binding, in addition to, the requirements for the next stage.

Let us go through the five stages and their components.

1. The things that get you noticed To become a superstar, you have to be selected for the national team first.

To be selected for the national team, you have to be noticed by the selectors. We are going to take a look at the cardinals of getting noticed for national selection.

TAI ENT/ DESIRE

The first requirement is talent. This is the natural or acquired ability to play cricket and the desire to do well in the game. The desire should translate into an innate ability to give every ball a shot.. in bowling, fielding or batting. Trying to do well at all times...without fail. In cricket, as in life, there are no on/off switches. You cannot just play hard on the right occasions and coast on others. The players who succeed are the ones who go all-out on every ball; win, lose or draw. He always gives his best while batting, bowling or fielding.

KAMAL JULKA

WANNA BE

FEATURE

SELF-CONFIDENCE

A major part of the success of any cricketer is the self-confidence that he possesses. That means being fully self-aware of one's talent, potential and capabilities and being confident of performing to the best of one's ability on any given occasion. They keep working on their game and keep improving. That is self-confidence.

II. The things that get you selected Once a player is noticed, the path to selection goes through the dual-doors of technique/fundamentals and performance.

TECHNIQUE/FUNDAMENTALS The basics of the game dictate the success or failure of all...including the superstars A Brian Lara, for example, still has to keep his eyes on each ball till the very last moment, and has to bring his foot to the pitch of the ball to successfully play a long innings. He may get away by not being in the proper position for a few balls, because of his immense talent and great eye. He may even play a great innings or two, but to be successful for long periods, with consistency, requires good technique and sound fundamentals. And no one is exempt from that requirement.

Nothing matters more in the long haul than having the right fundamentals and technique. The perfect example of this was Sunil Gavaskar, in batting. Just watch some tapes of a long innings or two of Gavaskar's. Notice the perfectly balanced stance and the efficient movement. Notice the grip that allows both hands to be equally effective without the bottom hand having a major say in the way the bat descends on the ball (as a lot of beginners erroneously tend to have (a strong bottom hand)). See his fabulous footwork, always alert and precise.

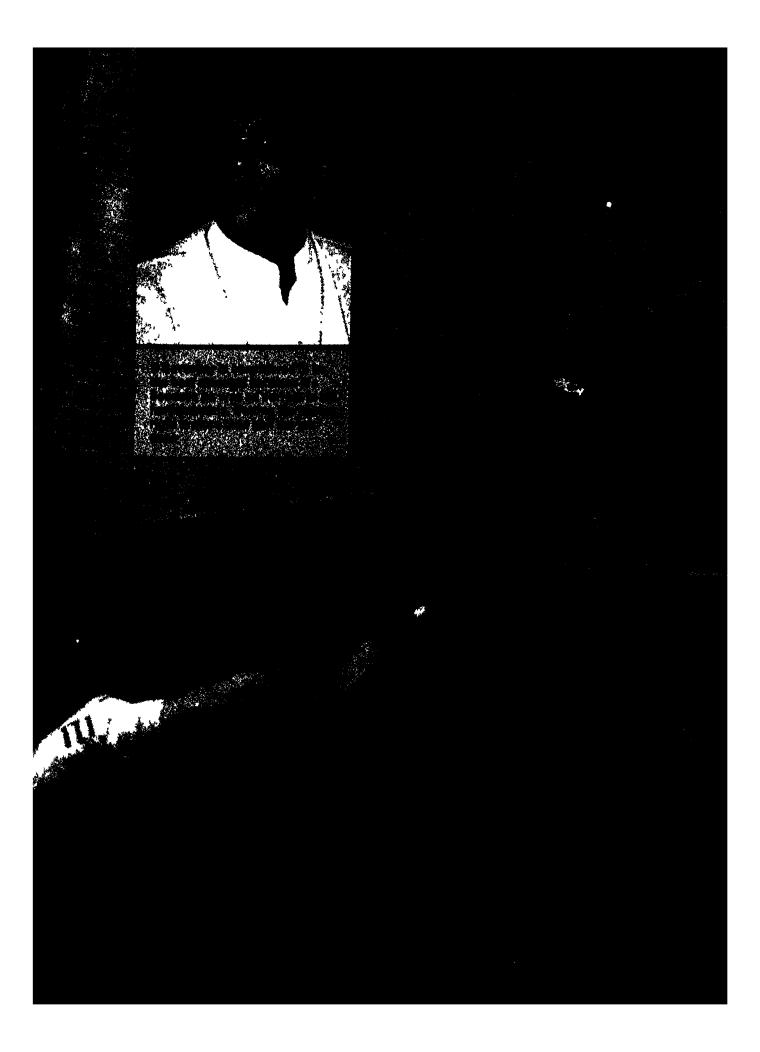


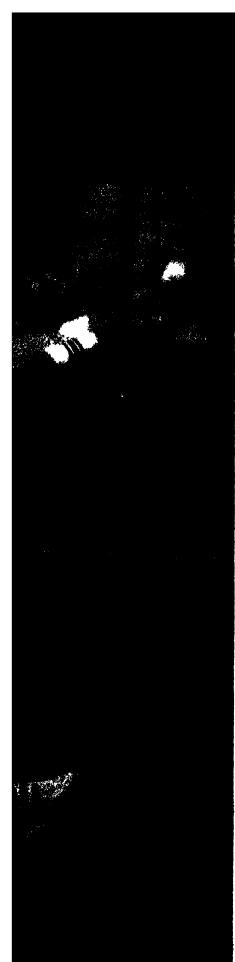
If Shane Warns impresses you as the world's best spinner, remember that he always does his homework on the batsmen and knows their strengths and weal

KAMAL JULKA

ASTAR?

Well, here's how to go about it and realise your cricketing dreams





The quick judgement of the length of the ball and the movement of the feet forward or back. The ability to always know where the off stump is. On the front foot the movement of the foot across to a ball that is on or slightly outside the off-stump—not straight down the pitch—which allowed him to play the out-swinger dead-in-the-middle, when so many others would edge it. The bat so close to the pad and always meeting the ball decisively. Gavaskar's exemplary technique made him the great batsman that he was.

Watch tapes of Richard Hadlee for fast bowling. The smooth, rhythmic run- up. Neither too long nor too short. The building of the tempo through the run- up. The high jump and the classic side-on delivery. The high arm-action with a perfectly still head. The beautiful follow-through with the bowling arm going across the left thigh and almost touching the ground to impart the maximal leverage. The seam coming down straight onto the turf, and then based on the seam and the shine, moving in the air and off the wicket to give him the edge over any batsman. Perfection.

Bishen Bedi for spin bowling. Ian Chappell fielding in the slips, Jonty Rhodes pouncing in the outfield, and Bob Taylor alert behind the stumps are to be similarly emulated for the soundness of technique.

The idea is to closely watch the stars and then try to work their fundamentals into one's own and practice till it starts becoming natural and consistently repeatable—even under match pressure situations.

PERFORMANCE

Finally it all comes down to performance. If a player is consistently performing to the best of his ability and that ability is amongst the best, then there is no one who can stop him from getting his rightful place in the team, given enough time.

There are many reports of players complaining that they were left out of the team, or dropped because of no fault of theirs. One can find ghosts behind all posts, or look at the demons inside oneself and having conquered

them, make one's mark.

First, always look within and find where you can improve. It is the easiest thing in the world to cry foul and think that there is some sort of conspiracy against you. It is what you do, after you are dropped, that tells about your character. There are only three things that can happen: One, you start moaning and complaining about being dropped and a section of the press deems your axing as a major conspiracy against you by the Board and selectors. You become an instant celebrity because of your martyr status. It does not get you anywhere as you are more concerned about the conspiracies against you than trying to perform in domestic cricket.

Two, you get discouraged to such a degree that you let yourself go and become mediocre, and play at a level that is never going to get you back into international cricket. You know it, and become comfortable with your fate

Three, you treat this as a challenge and work harder on your game than you ever have, to show the selectors that they have made a mistake and play your way back into the team on the sheer dint of your performances.

If one performs consistently the person cannot be kept down for long. So in reality the only conspiracy is the conspiracy that you perpetrate against yourself. And the only one that can keep you away from selection is also you. Believe, and you will find a way.

111. The things that secure your place in the team

SKILIS

The performances at the top level are based on the skill level of a player and how he converts these skills into performances. These are not made in hours or days. These are special skills that the top players have worked on all their lives to perfect, maintain and enhance into potent weapons.

The best batsmen work on their skills in the nets long after their colleagues have gone home. There are the bowlers who keep on bowling on that single stump in the nets to get more control over length and

SPECIAL FEAM

direction. There are the fielders who take extra ground fielding and catching practice to be the best that they can be. Investing in the enhancement of skills is the best thing a learner or even an accomplished player can do It is time that will be well rewarded in the end.

FILNESS

Inzamam-ul-Haq is a world-class batsman He has the right physical tools to dominate the game even at the Test level. He has played some of the gutsiest innings ever played for Pakistan under the severest of situations. But he should be the first to admit that he is not as fit as he should be.

Cricket history is replete with players who played below their potential due to lack of fitness. It may not be a lack of desire, just a disposition towards plumpness. Whatever it is, it is worth everything it takes to be fit, and by being fit, to fulfil your true potential.

There are others, on the other hand, who play beyond their capabilities because they are fitter. Jonty Rhodes is such an example. He is not the greatest batsman in the world but he is extremely fit and agile, and keeps making a good South African team on these qualities alone while having less talent than many that are left out.

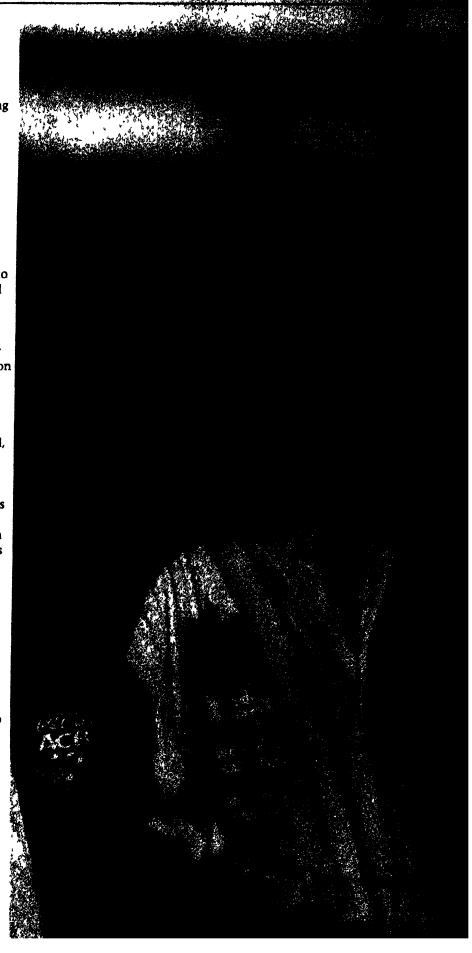
ATHTUDI

Attitude is the key to success in life The people who have the best attitudes are the ones who will invariably succeed and become leaders. They are the ones who are confident in themselves and see the glass as half full rather than half empty. They always play as the situation demands and always seem to be the one in control. They help out their teammates, and remain cool in all situations.

HAMWORK

Cricket is a team sport. It demands team play from all its participants. And only then can a team succeed in winning. That is the only true reason the game is played. It is not played so that one player can make a hundred or take ten wickets.

A lot of players keep their



performances above those of the team. Being a teammate means working with your partner and your captain while batting. Giving it your best on the field. Bowling from the wrong end so that the better bowler can have the better end...all for the team.

It is all this and more. Teamwork is cheering your mates when they are down and being as happy for a teammate's hundred as if it was your own, for it helped the team win.

COACHABILITY

The coach is an extension of you. He is there to help you realise your true potential as an individual and as a team. The better players are coaches' dreams come true. They work with the coach and listen to him.

Coachability means the ability of a player to work with the coach for the betterment of the player and the team. To consider himself as part of the whole rather than the whole itself.

IV. The things that make you a star The next step is to become a star in the world of cricket. To do that one about the enormity of the task and how difficult it is. Courage is to keep on doing the correct thing, one ball at a time. Courage is to have fear, but to overcome it. Courage is to perform under dire circumstances. All that is courage and all the stars have plenty of it.

PATIENCE

Cricket is about patience, if anything. The major element that is the foundation for success in Test cricket is acquired by maturity. Patience and maturity go hand in hand. The top players, apart from their skill and dedication, are invariably mature and patient. The patience helps them into succeeding beyond the ordinary.

Cricket requires this of its heroes in a greater measure than any other sport or game. For example, one can become the greatest tennis player while having little maturity and patience, but a lot of skill, e.g. John McEnroe in his prime. Not so in cricket. To play top class cricket and to succeed in it over long periods is a game of patience more than anything.

has to raise one's level even further for there are many Test players, but there are a very few stars.

COURAGE

Courage is the pre-eminent pre-requisite to becoming a star. In the cricketing sense, courage means having what it takes to do your duty, no matter how bleak the odds. Courage means hitting the last ball for six when only four are needed to win the match. Courage is to take nine wickets for one run, with forty runs left for defeat. Courage means coming in at 5/17 and making a hundred on a treacherous pitch againt a top class attack. Courage also means believing and being able to defend a measly 119 in the fourth innings of a Test match.

The measure of a man is how he stares failure in the eye and unflinchingly and methodically turns it into glorious success. Courage is to live in the moment and not think

Even a flamboyant Jayasuriya has to exhibit a lot of self-denial and patience if he is to succeed and score 340 in a Test match. Similarly, a Waqar has to be patient and keep working in certain situations with figures of 1/47 in 20 overs before he breaks through and gets the last five wickets. Patience counts.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline both on and off the field. The more important one is on the field and that encompasses having the discipline to bat or bowl according to a situation and a plan of action. That means letting the situation dictate your batting or bowling. If it means you play pure defense then you do so completely without any rushes of blood in the middle. If it means bowling to one side of the stumps, then you do that to a T, and not try to experiment with your direction, to try to get that extra yard of pace. The

S P E C I A L F E A T U

capability to think through one's actions, and then executing them according to plan is one of the major keys to success.

ADVERSITY QUOTIENT

Top class cricket is not always going to be smooth sailing. There are going to be many occasions that are going to challenge the character of a young player. The way he deals with adversity and fights it out is going to determine the level of success he is going to enjoy in cricket.

The players should have the character to come through when the chips are down and steady the ship, and turn the losing situation into a positive one for their team.

INSTINCT

The idea is that a player should keep doing what he was doing before his selection and play his natural, instinctive game no matter what the stage. That is going to make him successful at the next level. Curbing one's natural game tends to kill his

elite few 'superstars' of world cricket. That means that you are amongst the top ten players in the world and have the capability to change a match or a series by your performances. It is a pantheon that is restricted to the best of the best and includes, at present, players like Wasim Akram, Brian Lara, Steve Waugh, Waqar Younis, Allan Donald, Sachin Tendulkar, and Shane Warne—lofty company indeed. But to get there you have to be more than good. You have to work more than hard. And you have to have more than desire.

PRI PARATION

Preparation is the prime element for success in any endeavour. The boy scouts are right about 'being prepared'. Preparation means doing all the things necessary, before the act, that can increase your chances of success during competition. This is very elemental. There is no excuse for not preparing.

Preparation often means the



flair and only ends up stifling the player. If Jayasuriya and Afridi were told every time they went out to bat to try and curb their natural game, and play a riskless innings their contribution to their teams would not be a patch on what they have achieved so far. Improvement can always be made but it should never be at the cost of one's natural game and instincts. The earlier mindset should be allowed to blossom.

ADAPTABLETTY

With the modern game being a two-headed monster of Tests and One-day internationals, more versatility is required from the modern players than their predecessors.

Already, countries like Australia are experimenting with different Test and ODI teams. They are admitting that their players do not have what it takes to play in both styles of the game.

V. The things that make you a superstar

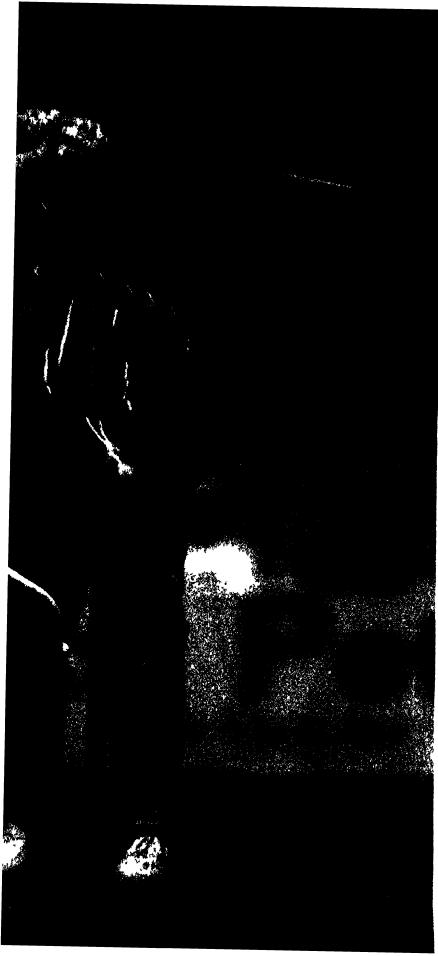
The ultimate is to be amongst the

difference between winning a Test match or losing it by an innings. Let's take a perfect example. Mushtaq Ahmed is a great leg spinner and so is Shane Warne. Both have their strengths and weaknesses. Warne has this leg-break that spins a mile and a great flipper. He does not really have a googly. Mushtaq, on the other hand, has every trick in the book including a good leg-spinner, a great flipper and two or three wonderful types of googlies.

Yet, Shane Warne is universally acknowledged as the premier leg-spinner for his edge in preparation over an equally talented Mushtaq. Mushtaq shows up for a Test match and then discovers the opponents' strengths and weaknesses. It is often said that he does not even know to whom he is bowling, in most cases.

Warne, on the other hand, spends tens of hours watching recordings of all the key batsmen he is going to face in a coming series and dissects their strengths and weaknesses with his





personal spin coach. Warne also works on his technique, during the off-days, with the same coach, to be in the best position to succeed in matches.

WORK-ETHICS

To achieve super-stardom one has to be prepared to work harder than what humanly seems possible. The best players are often the ones who work the hardest on their games. They know that all the work is going to be rewarded in the shape of superior performances, winning, incentives, endorsements, public adulation and luck.

Ben Hogan, one of the greatest golf players of all time said it best, replying to the accusation by some of his competitors that he was just lucky rather than good, "The harder I practise-the luckier I get." Hogan improved his luck constantly by being the first on the practice range and the last to leave. He improved his game to such a level as to be able to hit the ball blindfolded as he could by seeing it. His work ethic enabled him to be often called the greatest to play the game of golf

LEADLRSHIP

The ability to lead from the front is paramount to the success of a team. That does not pertain only to the team captain but also to the seniors in the squad. They have to show leadership by setting the best examples, both on and off the field.

That means being responsible for their own actions and being self-starters and achievers rather than being prima donnas Leadership is taking a team on one's shoulders and taking everyone along to victory: to not leave it to anyone else to finish the job.

FUN

First and foremost in cricket, as in any other sport—have fun. Cricket is, above all, a game and it is to be played with a sense of joy and enjoyment. It is a labour of love, and the more you love the game and enjoy it, and have fun playing it, the better you will be. Never let the fun go out of your game.

That is the essence of the game.

MATURING LIKE

MARTINA HINGIS, despite being so young, has the mental and physical make-up to dominate women's tennis for a few more years

BY SUPRAKASH GHOSHAL, LONDON

HEN she is off court she acts like a normal teenage kid but when she is on court ' Novotna was at a loss for words to describe her Wimbledon nemesis

We understood her difficulties. It would have been very easy and obvious to describe Martina Hingis as 'devastating, bulldozing, immaculate brilliant magnificent' etc That's what one is tempted to do when a sixteen-year-old creates history on the hallowed grass of Wimbledon But most of those adjectives would not have been appropriate, not quite Because, Martina Hingis is not a flawless performer. Her game is not immaculate For all her triumphs, she is vulnerable. And she knows it

But the most unmistakable hallmark of a champion, of an emerging phenomenon in world tennis was there all the time. This was her awareness of her frailties, and of course her ability to overcome them The greatness of Martina Hingis is that she can compensate for her weaknesses with a maturity that belies her age She can think her way to victory

Her service, for instance, is slower than many of her vanguished opponents In last year's Wimbledon, Jana Novotna became a case in point The machine gauged Hingis service to

Martina Hinges should have some competition offi Graf comes back to full-time tennis

be at least 13 mph slower than Novotna's—a considerable handicap against such experienced and fiercely ambitious players. But Hingis showed she could think for herself. She overcame her problems by changing the pace of her returns. And also the angle of her attack. It all looks so deceptively simple and ordinary. Another unmistakable sign of her effortless artistry.

There are those who see Hingis' youth as her greatest asset, but that hardly tells the whole story. Her teenage life has given her very little experiences. Yet, Martina Hingis seems remarkably pragmatic. The unguarded youthful exuberance which should come naturally to her, causing her to make mistakes, is almost always tamed by a sense of reality, rationality, which represent her professionalism.

"What is unusual about Hingis is her amazing maturity," says Monica Seles, "She has a great sense of her strengths and weaknesses. She seems to have a great balance in everything she does, on and off court, and that's nice to see."

Martina Hingis indeed, is constantly aware that she has made history, becoming the youngest player ever to get to the top of the professional pile. Yet, she knows she has to respect many of her illustrious rivals, even though they have been vanquished by her. That is a soundly professional attitude.

"I think it is a great thing to become the best. That's what I have been working on all my life, and now it is happening. It is a great feeling, especially at my young age, but that does not stop me from taking many of my famous opponents very seriously. To be honest, I fear them. And that fear helps me. motivates me," said Hingis.

Talking of fear, one of the greatest professionals in the world of tennis, Jimmy Connors once said, "Fear is like fire. If you can control it, it will cook your food, warm your house, but if it goes out of control, it will destroy everything."

Martina Hingis, like a thorough



"What is unusual about Hingis is her amazing maturity. She has a great sense of her strengths and weaknesses. She seems to have a great balance in everything she does, on and off court, and that's nice to see."—Monica Seles

professional, has learnt how to control her fear, and achieve her status without having to show off. Those who knew her, especially over the last one and half years are united in their admiration. They say, as a person, she has not changed. She loves tennis, she loves success, she loves life. And her flashing smile shows she wants to enjoy it all with as much simplicity as possible

Her rise to the top, albeit hastened by Steffi Graf's injury, has been far more rapid than most people expected. In the Italian Open in 1996, she defeated a distracted Graf in the quarter finals before losing comprehensively to Conchita Martinez in the final.

But that win against Graf in Rome

Jana Novotna places a congratulatory arm around Hingis after the latter wins the '97 Wimbledon championship

was the beginning of her startling climb, although she believes it was her 1996 Wimbledon doubles title, with Helena Sukova that was the turning point in her career

The other factor that made a contribution to her rise was her decision to seek help from the Swiss marathon runner Richard Umberg to get fitter The difference was palpable when she arrived in New York in September that year Observers once again noted that there was a new-found maturity to her play that proved altogether too much for Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Jana Novotna She now knew she could beat a player in the top 10 and, since the U S Open, there has been no turning back, with four consecutive tournament wins last year, including the Australian Open.

Hingis has, for all practical purposes, re-written the record books ever since she picked up a racket. And she did it with a disarming smile on her face. In victory, in defeat. I hope fortune continues to favour such smiling people who can take it all so nicely in their stride—the adversities as well as the successes.



ABIGSPLASH



Pictures from the 8th World Swiganting Champtonships held at Sydney

PHOTOGRAPHE APP







The visterious (inflet intelegrate) team (top) on the position after receiving the gold quedal. They had detected The Notherlands 7-5 in the finals. Australiae prodigy ion Thrope (below), aged 15, cools dense after existing the map a 40km fractified final, and (but) fort. Butte of the USA wears the 7th Drugs' budge as he displays his gold model other wigning the map's 20km breastroke.





freewheeling

T was a shock to see Anand, a master in rapid chess play, (who hasn't lost a match in this format for four years now), blundering in the first tie-breaker against Karpov, despite being in a winning position.

Is there something wrong with us Indians? Why do we always falter on the brink of victory? Is there something in our upbringing that makes us unable to go in for the kill? Does the excessive pampering done by our mothers in our very early years make us much too emotionally soft? Then, in a complete turnabout, as we grow up, there are far too many strictures: "Don't do this. Don't do that. Be careful. Look out. Stop behaving like a kid, etc."

We are constantly admonished by parents, teachers, relatives and friends. They interfere callously and prevent us from developing our individuality and courage. This results in a tenuous self-belief and we are unable to handle stress with equanimity. When we are in crunch situations—as we have seen in numerous international cricket matches—inevitably, we start panicking and make a mess of everything. (Is the Bangladesh win an aberration?)

Was Anand unconsciously reflecting all this? There is no doubt that he has some psychological frailty. Twice now, he has lost in high pressure situations; both times, he was in a good position to win. First to Kasparov in New York in '95 and now in Lausanne, against an ageing Karpov At 28, almost near the peak of his powers, he was battling against a 46-year-old man. Surely, it should have been a comprehensive win for Anand.

But that was not to be. Karpov possesses an inner fire. Just look at his eyes. Even now, they burn with ruthless desire. But he doesn't play like an obvious killer: instead of savage attacks, he wears down opponents by dull, dogged defence and then counter-attacks late in the game. In retrospect, the older man kept his nerves far better than the young Anand.

People say that Anand is a nice guy. Very accessible and friendly. Down to earth. Naturally witty. But you need to become merciless and vicious when you are playing a chess match. As Bobby Fisher once famously remarked, "Chess is like war. The object is to crush the other man's mind."

Anand does not look at it that way: "There are a lot of players who actually enjoy beating an opponent, while others like a fight, regardless of its outcome. I am like that. I like solving complex problems and unlike the killers, enjoy playing the game."

ILLUSTRATION ARTHUR CARDOZO



After Anand's defeat, I came across an article by Simon Barnes in 'The Times', London where he wrote perceptively, "A great athlete actually relishes adversity. Look across the panoplies of sport and observe the truly great. All had a zest for combat, a taste for being truly tested. All wished to explore the limits of their own possibilities.

"But time after time, we are forced to wonder why one great talent succeeds, while another greater talent falls short.

"The reason is not the mere will to

win'. Rather, it is the will to be tested at the very highest level. It is the ability to not only dwell on the far edge of sporting possibility but to hold one's balance—and to relish the proximity of the void."

Is Anand a great talent who is going to fall short? Only time will give us the answer. Chess experts say that he is one of the most gifted players in the history of the game.

As he himself acknowledges, "I see a lot of variations quite early. People don't have this ability but my rationalisations are very accurate. I am fortunate that this aspect is inherent, for it takes considerable time to acquire it."

Today, Anand is certainly stunned by this loss, no matter the picture of composure that he presents to the world. In private, he must have surely broken down...

But he has an admirable power of resilience. He showed this quality after that confidence-sapping defeat to Kasparov in 1995. He analysed his loss with a calm rationality and realised that his opening game was weak. He then proceeded to practise for hours together, with his second Elizabar Ubilava, in a house in Spain for several weeks. The result: his opening game was immeasurably strengthened.

He needs to go deep within himself once again, to find out why he was defeated. What is the flaw in his mental make-up that made him crumble, is the question he has to ask himself. His wife Aruna will have to play a tremendous role now to encourage and prod him. Of course, it's not the end of the world. With his talent, youth and widespread experiences, another chance is bound to come.

One is further optimistic that Anand will make a comeback simply because he loves the game so much: "Chess is not a kind of job you are led into. It is a vocation. I have chosen it because I like it. The chess board itself is fascinating and there is a special kind of atmosphere in an encounter that is unfolding."

Shevlin Sebastian



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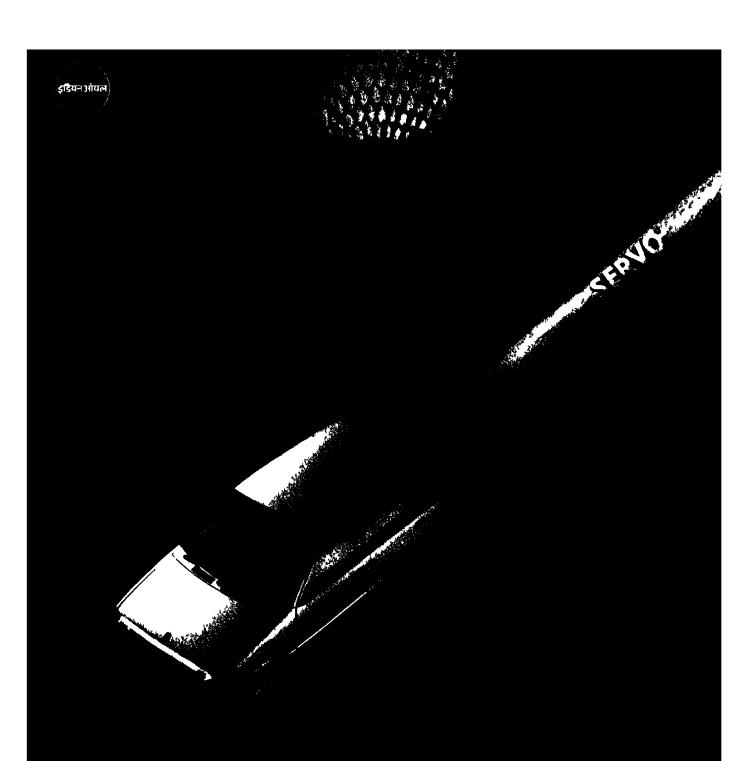




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LEADING FROM THE FRONT

Despite his up and down form, Mark Taylor has been an outstanding captain for Australia

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TRUE GRIT

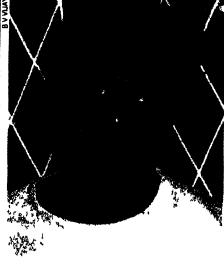
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FREEWHEELING

COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF AWAGAL SRINATH BY ALOKE MITRA AND INSET PHOTOGRAPH OF MARK FAYLOR BY SANTOSH GHOSH

Editor: Mansur Alı Khan Pataudı

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NTING

With a weak bowling attack over-dependent on Shane Warne, Australia effort to win

fury with the non-availability of Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie —both out with injuries.

Frankly speaking, against an opening attack comprising Paul Reiffel, Michael Kasprowicz, Adam Dale and Paul Wilson backed up by the spin of Warne and Gavin Robertson, the likes of Tendulkar, Mohammed Azharuddin, Navjyot Sidhu, Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid have to bat really poorly—twice in a match—for India to lose.

It does not look like happening despite taking into account the

KAMAL JULKA

Debashish Mohanty or Harvinder Singh. But it is the spin cupboard which is bare. After trying and rejecting several players, the selectors have once again fallen back on the tric of Anil Kumble, Rajesh Chauhan and Azhar's pet Venkatapathi Raju, responsible for the successive home series wins over England, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and New Zealand in the early Nineties.

The key to the three-Test series, therefore depends on the kind of surfaces on which the matches will be played. Flat featherbeds as were on

INE successive Test series wins, two each against the West Indies, South Africa and old foes England, both at-home-and-away basis, and one each versus New Zealand, Pakistan and Sri Lanka at home have eached the Australians the tag of unofficial

Well, no one can grudge Mark Taylor's men of their new-found status, but just about nobody is willing to bet their last penny on the Aussies making it a Perfect Ten by beating the Indians in their own backyard.

world champions.

The reason is simple. In between their nine series wins, the loss to India in the one-off Test in New Delhi the year before last still sticks out like a sore thumb. On a mine-field of a track, the Aussies were humiliated by a none-too formidable Indian side led by Sachin Tendulkar. It, incidentally, was Sachin's debut Test as a captain. That Taylor's men also failed to win a single one-day game on that tour further dented the Aussies' stock.

True, that the Aussie side did not have Shane Warne in their ranks. But the question being asked now is whether one Warne is enough to take care of an Indian batting line-up which boasts of some of the best players of spin in the world?

If the Aussie line-up has been strengthened by the return of Warne, their pace attack has lost much of its



Ricky Ponting: aggressive and determined

unpredictability of the Indian top order.

The overdepedence on Warne could prove to be costly for the Aussies as the blonde leg-spinner is still recovering from a shoulder injury which saw him skip the recent tour of New Zealand.

Tendulkar has already shown the way to tackle Warne with an epic double century in the opening game of the tour. While the other batsmen in the Indian side may not be as gifted as the Mumbai skipper, but all of them are of a proven pedigree with tons of runs behind them on the benign pitches of the sub-continent.

India's problem area is bowling. With Venkatesh Prasad being deemed 'unfit' by the selectors, the new ball will be shared by Jawagal Srinath, view against Sri Lanka last year will almost certainly result in dull draws.

The presence of Muttaiah Muralidharan in the Lankan ranks had deterred India from opting for designer turning tracks, which was a mistake. They should not repeat it versus the Australians.

The only way to beat the Aussies is to spin them out. If the Indian batsmen can take care of Warne between them, Chauhan, Raju and Kumble will be more than a handful for the Waughs, Pontings and Blewetts.

All it calls for is some clear-cut strategy on the part of the Indian thinktank, which has been missing of late.

It is in this department that Australia is lar ahead. In Mark Taylor,

IS WARNE THE GREATEST?

The Indian tour will confirm or dent the legspinner's soaring reputation

HAD he not been one of the finest leg-spinners in the game, Shane Warne would most certainly have had a roaring practice as a psychologist.

It is his ability to read the batsman's mind, more than his prodigious leg-breaks or slippery flippers, which makes him such a lethal proposition with a ball in hand. The Indian batsmen, therefore, must win the mental battle before they take guard against this blonde leggie from Down Under.

Over the past few years, Warne has done enough damage with his brand of leg-spin to merit a place in cricket's Hall of Fame. No leg spinner had claimed over 300 Test scalps till Warne reached the milestone earlier this year. With 303 wickets in his kitty, he is set to overhaul West Indian Lance Gibbs' tally of 309 which will make him the most successful spinner of all time.



But then, is Warne really the greatest?

When you consider the likes of Bill O'Reilly, Subash Gupte, Richie Benaud, Bhagwat Chandrashekhar and Abdul Qadir, one is not so sure. Despite his fabulous record, it is too early to put him up there at the very top. Out of his 303 victims, 250 have been either Englishmen, South Africans, Kiwis or West Indians who hardly have a reputation for playing spin.

Warne's success against Pakistan has been by and large restricted to the hard, bouncy 'home' wickets. It is his pathetic record against India and Sri Lanka which puts a big question mark on his credentials. Just 15 wickets in five Tests versus Lanka at an average of almost 40 is tardy by any standards.

Arjuna Ranatunga, in fact, has gone on record stating: "Warne is 5 per cent talent and 95 per cent hype"

In the two Tests he has played against India, Warne has managed only one wicket. The pasting he had received at the hands of Vinod Kambli in the Centenary Cup in New Zealand in 1994 must be still fresh in his memory.

To be fair to Warne, he has not played much cricket on sub-continental pitches which are a spinner's delight, because he has opted out of various tours to this part of the world for reasons which are best known to him.

But until he sets the record straight against players who are considered to be the best players of spin, Warne's curriculum vitae lacks a key component essential for measuring his greatness. Sanjay Manjrekar has already sounded a warning bell by saying Warne may not be very successful on the flat pitches in India.

It is up to Shane Warne to deliver.

Sumit Mukherjee

THE SHANE WARNE FACT-FILE

Country	Mat	S eils	Run	Witte	Avg	Best	5wk	10wk
England	17	5599	2203	85	23 56	8/71	4	ı
South Africa	12	4117	1342	64	20.96	7/56	4	2
New Zealand	9	2887	1037	54	19.20	6/31	2	
West Indies	13	2781	1373	47	27.93	7/52	1	
Pakistan	6	1780	702	37	18,97	7/23	3	1
Sri Lanka	5	1217	591	15	39 40	4/71	***	-
India	2	408	228	1	228 00	1/150	_	
	64	18789	7416	303	23 81	8/71	14	4

Compiled by Ravi kant Srivestava

they have a captain who does not miss a trick. His captaincy record of 21 wins in 39 Tests speaks for itself. Moreover, Taylor leads a side which is quite settled. And his handling of Warne has been exemplary.

With the kind of arsenal he has at his disposal, it is unlikely that Taylor will go into the Test series with all guns blazing. He is too much of a professional to try such stunts.

The Aussies would rather like to

wait and watch, hoping to catch the Indians off-guard at some point in the series and then go in for the kill.

Only the Indians are capable of beating themselves. Will Azhar's men oblige?

Share. The Magic

> WILLS Indian Team

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

Despite his form going up and down,
MARK TAYLOR is probably the best captain
in contemporary cricket

BY ANDY O'BRIEN, AUSTRALIA

F you were not familiar with the scenario of the Australian cricket team, you would have thought it odd to see a familiar gum-chewing figure standing at his customary first slip in a Sheffield Shield match between New South Wales and Western Australia at the WACA, while the national team was playing a one day series away from home in New Zealand.

But for those of us now accustomed to what a few years ago would have been described as a weird situation, it wasn't strange to see the masticating Mark Taylor captaining his state team while Steve Waugh led the Australian one day outfit though its paces in what the players described as an "unnecessary" five game series against the Kiwis prior to their tour of India.

For those of you who have been living in Mars for the last six months, here's news for you: Australia has initiated another first in cricket. Different captains and even separate teams for Test matches and the limited over stuff.

That was the reason why Taylor

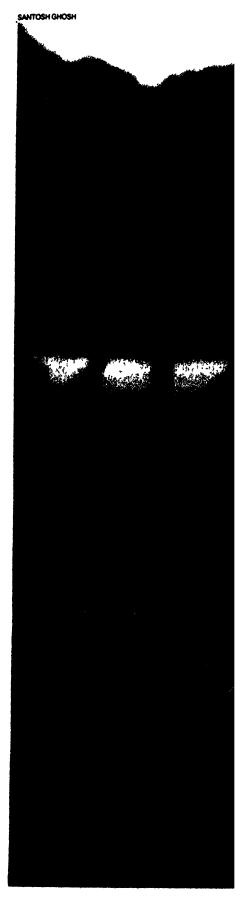
soaked in the sun while across the Tasman Sea, his colleagues struggled to beat the wet weather and a fresh New Zealand team. As crazy as the concept may sound, Australian cricket now seems to have come to terms with the different needs for the different varieties of the game.

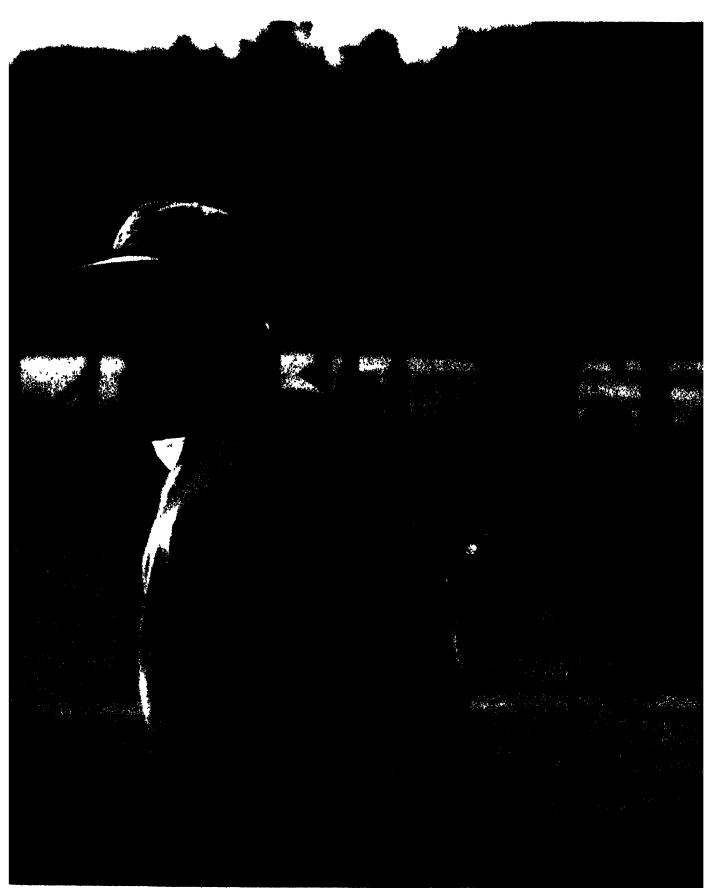
In fact, Mark Taylor is resigned to the fact that he will not represent Australia again in limited overs cricket, and he sees no problem in having vastly different sides for Test matches and one-day internationals.

In fact, the Australian Cricket Board's wise decision to have separate squads for both forms of cricket, and a view that it would not be ideal for one man to lead both sides, has effectively pushed Taylor into a corner and will hasten his retirement from international cricket.

The man who has led Australia astutely in both forms of cricket for the past three years wants to continue as Test captain and opening batsman. But he fully realises his limitations as a one day batsman. This became quite obvious when he stood down for the final five of Australia's seven one day matches in South Africa in April last

Mark Taylor: plenty to smile about





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Mark Taylor with Sachin Tendulkar during the former's last visit to India

year and did not play in the third Texaco Trophy match against England in May.

It all began there. The bold decision to stay out and to inject fresh vibrant life into the one-day team was one of the reasons Australia won that series.

Coach Geoff Marsh has always been

supportive of Taylor as Test captain and has no problems about him continuing in that role while Steve Waugh or anybody else leads the limited overs' side.

Waugh has proved in his short while that in spite of initially struggling with his own form, he is an uncompromising competitor and inspirational captain. But he, like Taylor, is 32 and cannot last forever.

There has been a call from the experts Down Under for the authorities to start grooming a captain who might one day combine both Waugh's and Taylor's duties. Shane Warne was the obvious choice as vice captain of both the Test and one day teams. But there is a possibility that Warne's finger and shoulder problems might shorten his career. It looks like Australia needs to look further down



the road.

Australia has a full itinerary over the next 12 months. The Indian tour is followed by the Sharjah tournament and a similar series in Sri Lanka in August before the three Test tour of Pakistan in September and October as well as the Commonwealth Games cricket competition in Kuala Lumpur. That's followed by another hectic Ashes series in the southern summer

of 1998-99.

By the end of that, chances are not only will there be many a change in the teams but perhaps in the captains too. It very nearly came to that last year at the end of the Ashes series where Taylor hung on to his place merely on the strength of him being the captain. He ended the Test series with a total of 317 runs with an average of 31.70.

He had blamed the low averages in England on the fact that it was a bowlers' series and predicted that he could see himself improving. Taylor insists that he always had the support of his teammates through the crisis. "I knew I had their support. Alan Border was in a similar situation to me three years or so ago. I think he eventually retired of his own bat and wasn't forced to."

When retirement was mentioned, he had said: "It's something you've got to decide yourself with your family and with the people who appoint you. If I go on, it's something I will do series by series."

Taylor does not believe it necessary that a captain be appointed for X amount of games. His philosophy is simple: "It's enough to keep telling the captain 'you're doing a good job' 'keep going', or 'it's time to give it away.""

Back home the talk was that there was no lower that Taylor's form could go. The only way, was up. To some extent that was right. But if Taylor was worried about criticism of his form with the bat, he refused to let it show. He hung around even when his form was the butt of many a joke in Australia and waited for the tide to change.

Today after two Test centuries in the season just ended Down Under, Taylor's form is no longer a topic of discussion at the pubs and on television. But the whole ordeal hasn't been a big deal for the man they call "Tubby".

"People take everything about the game a bit too seriously. I've really enjoyed the captaincy. Even if I don't captain Australia tomorrow, I'll be a pretty happy man.

"If I were to have lost the captaincy

or to lose it in future, it would not be the end of the world for the game of cricket. Or the end of the world for Mark Taylor either. As Sir Donald Bradman said, 'We're only the custodians of the game. You try to do the best you can while you are in the game'.

"I have and so have all the Australian players, made a conscious effort to always play attacking cricket. When I took over the captaincy, I vowed that we would try to get results and make the game interesting.

"It also pleases me to see the full-house signs going up at Tests at which we play. That suggests that we are playing a good brand of cricket," he said.

Taylor maintains that being in charge of such a good and talented cricket team enables him to take greater risks than other captains.

"It all gets down to the captain's faith in his players. The only time you take risks is when you believe your players can do it and you are prepared to put them under pressure to do it."

He also has gone on record saying that a good side can survive and flourish with a different captain for Test and one dayers. In any other country, that would be hard to imagine. If the Test captain lost his place in the limited overs side he would have lost the respect and confidence, if not of the players, then, at least, of the public.

In Australia that is not so. Taylor is humble enough to bat, at times, at number four for New South Wales and is still influential enough to have a say in what happens in Australian cricket. Prior to Steve Waugh's team leaving for New Zealand, Taylor publicly commented that he thought Shane Warne ought to be given a break for that trip in order to be fully fit for India. Warne was left out of the squad, much to the dismay of Steve Waugh but to the relief of Taylor and Warne himself.

So for those of you who think Australia has a wimp of a Test captain, think again. Taylor is probably the best captain in contemporary cricket and more importantly he leads the best Test team in the world.

"THA

JAWAGAL SRINATH talks about his comeback after a serious shoulder injury and on a host of other topics

INTERVIEWED BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

Over the years you have coped with one difficulty after another. Initially, it was having to wait for your turn to become India's strike bowler. Then, when you had blossomed into a potent bowler came this injury.

Since we were winning, there was no chance that I could get into the eleven Kapil and Manoj did a wonderful job and the wicket also didn't need a third seamer. But I wouldn't say it was a difficulty. It was a learning process for me. I mean, whatever little I have learnt, was probably during that phase of my cricketing career.

As for suffering from an injury, it is part and parcel of the life of fast bowlers. But it was unfortunate that I had an injury. I need to be more careful from now on

For a fast bowler, a rotator cuff injury is bad news. How did you cope with it both mentally and physically?

Well, I was warned just before the injury that I need to stop playing and keep my rehabilitation and strengthening exercises going. But I think since I was able to bowl to some extent, I ignored the warning and went ahead with my bowling. That was the stage where I should have



ERED"

been a little more careful about my injury. Whether it's a rotator cuff, knee or any other joint, it's a serious injury. But thank God I recovered.

Your recovery after the operation was fantastic. You seem not to have lost any pace. What do you account for this?

First of all, I should thank the doctor who operated on me. I think he has done a wonderful job. Mr Gajendra of Rashtrothana Seva Sangha later put me onto the right rehabilitation course. A stint at the Australian Cricket Academy helped me a lot with the strengthening aspect. All of them there—the manager, the-biomechanic professor Mr Richard Dawn, Wayne Phillips and Rodney Marsh—worked in tandem

Even your bowling action has been largely unaffected. Do you attribute this to Dr. Fergusson or is it the hard work and physical exercises you've put in?

It's actually both. If he (Dr Fergusson) had not done a good job on me, I don't think I would not have been able to do the rehabilitation strengthening exercises. If I hadn't done it properly, I would never have made a comeback. So keeping all this in mind, I think I contribute probably 60 to 70 per cent to the doctor who did the operation on me and the rest to the rehabilitation which followed later on.

During the lay-off, how did you keep yourself motivated? Did you depend a lot on your family during the crisis?

Of course, my family stood by my side throughout. But I need to thank my friends in South Africa who were of great help to me.

For a cricketer used to non-stop

playing and travelling, how did you pass the time during that eight-month break?

Well, rehabilitation is quite a strenuous thing. The physical requirement and exertion is quite a bit and takes a lot of time. Of course, I've other things to occupy myself with if I'm not playing cricket.

Initially, you used to be visibly agitated when a batsman hit you for four. In your effort to bowl better, you often lost your line and length. This does not happen too often now. What is the reason? I think it's the experience. There's no substitute for experience. You need to play in lots of games, to become more

Nowadays, you are bowling much better even in the slog overs than before. How has the change come about?

and more mature. The more games

you play, the more you learn.

Earlier I used to try to get wickets, at all costs. This was because I did not have that extra bit of quickness to get those wickets. Maybe, there was a little bit of inexperience. Also, maybe, my thoughts were not right. As I said before, experience counts a lot. That has probably given me the edge.

From your early days till now, you always looked to be a tense person out there in the middle. Have you become calmer or is it that this tension helps you to bowl better?

It's not tension. I think it's probably the concentration. I really don't want to think of anything else, or try to laugh or Joke about. I don't think you can play cricket laughing or smiling all, the time. From my perspective, it's only the concentration that matters. People might come to whatever conclusions they want, but I think, looks can be deceptive.



Like most people, Srinath likes to watch TV and listen to music. It helps that he has a nice bit of equipment.

These days, when you are fielding, you throw the ball underarm. Is this a passing phase or is it going to be a permanent feature so as to not aggravate the shoulder?

I can throw underarm right into the hands of the wicketkeeper Well I've been asked to avoid over the shoulder activities as much as possible It's just a precaution which I've been taking Probably once everything settles down in my shoulder, I can start throwing over the shoulder

Fast bowlers often try to intimidate the batsmen by sheer aggression. However, you let the ball do the talking. What is your mantra to psyche out the batsmen?

There's no mantra You are not trying to scare the batsmen away Well, intimidation is part of fast bowling. It all depends on the batsmen. If he is not scared of fast bowling, then there is no question of intimidation.

I think you will be a fool in front of him, if you try to be more aggressive by walking up to the batsman and giving him tough look stares. You need to work the batsmen out always Batsmen have the gear to shield themselves against fast bowling. Of course, there are a few weaknesses in any batsman. Intimidatory aggression has a different meaning in my dictionary. I believe in consistency and perseverance.

After Venkatesh Prasad joined you in the team, both his and your bowling has gone up a couple of notches. What's the secret behind this?

If both the bowlers are bowling well at both ends, the batsmen will definitely not have a good time in the middle Obviously, they're bound to make mistakes We've been bowling together since the time we were juniors, playing mostly for Karnataka

Do you interact with each other



Photographed at the gate of his house in Bangalore

often off the field and work on each other's strengths and weaknesses?

We know each other for quite a long time. That s probably an advantage. I know what Venky bowls and Venky knows what I m bowling. In case, if there s any flaw in our bowling we talk to each other and try to rectify that. Yes, we have that understanding

With the game of cricket so heavily tilted in favour of the batsman, how do fast bowlers like you remain motivated?

Nothing much can be done about it I mean, day by day everything is benefiting the batsmen People, for obvious reasons, love to see the ball hit for a six rather than see batsmen getting out caught behind leg before or being bowled We can t complain about it We have to just play the game

For years, we have had one consistent fast bowler in Kapil Dev. Today, we seem to have a surplus of fast medium bowlers. Even the Kuruvillas and the Mohantys seem to be able to hold their own in international cricket. What is the reason behind this resurgence? How has the MRF Academy helped?

MRF has played a very big role in Indian cricket fast bowling. All fast bowlers who have played for the country have at one stage or the other definitely gone to the MRF Pace Foundation.

They have one of the best facilities and one of the best coaches in the world comes and talks to you. You get an opportunity to go abroad to train. The best trainers from Australia and South Africa come to the Pace. Foundation. Abroad a lot of research and development has been done on the fitness of the players. This keeps changing all the time. I mean the fitness routine for this year will.



Wasim Akram is probably the best fast bowler right now. Allan Donald is another. Waqar Younis is probably a little bit jaded. These three and also McGrath are the best in the business today.



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I only look forward to bowling the next ball in the next match or whatever. That's my goal. I mean if I try to bowl well, then probably I will end up getting wickets



in a rare moment of rest and leisure at home

definitely change for the next year We get a chance to experience that

only when we go to such centres I think it is (the MRF Pace Foundation) a wonderful thing that has happened to Indian cricket, especially for the fast bowlers

It's nice that the boys in India are now feeling that fast bowling is not a difficult task after seeing, probably Kapil, Manoj, and, to some extent, Prasad and myself There is every reason for them to believe that they can do well in cricket by taking up fast bowling as their career It's good to see Kuruvilla, Mohanty, Harvinder Singh and so many others in the reckoning now I watched Kapil and Manoj bowling I think these players are watching us bowl Everyone will be inspired this way

Have you set yourself any short or long term targets?

There's no target as such I only look forward to bowling the next ball in the next match or whatever That's my goal I mean if I try to bowl well, then probably I will end up getting wickets

Do you have any marriage plans at present?

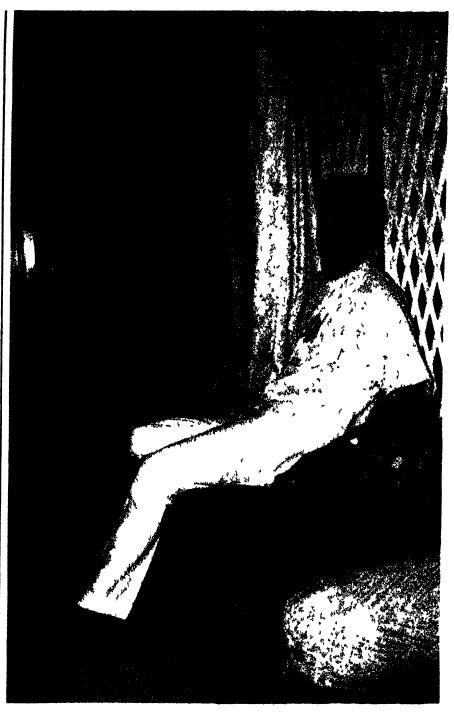
I have not really cast my mind yet on that

In spite of not playing for the major part of last year, you have been ranked 15th in 'Wisden's' January list of bowlers. How do you rate yourself as an international bowler?

I really don't know how they rate it Pepsi has a different rating and Ceat has a different rating I would rate myself as just one of the players in international cricket. I think there's a lot to be achieved as regards fast bowling

Who do you think is the best bowler today?

Wasım Akram is probably the best fast bowler right now Allan Donald is



another Wagar Younis is probably a little bit jaded. These three and also McGrath are the best in the business today

How has Bangalore suddenly become the cradle of Indian cricket?

I think the system in Karnataka is good for the time being I wouldn't say it's the cricketers from Bangalore, but | PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIJAY

the cricketers from India who are doing well Just because they all represent Karnataka, I wouldn't take it as an incentive or feather in my cap Ultimately, the point is to play for India I never believe that only Karnataka players should play for the country If a player is good from any state, he has to play for the country

I'M ALREADY T. NOW IT IS THE QUIT, TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE UPCOMING SWIMMERS .

LIGHT GREEN

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

VICTORY STAND AT A CHESS TOURNAMENT

PRODUCTS OF A TENNIS ACADEMY



l Disagree

PROPOS Sheviin Sebastian's Areport on Justice Chandrachud's clean chit to players and officials in his probe (Sportsworld, Jan. '98 issue). Right from the outset we knew Chandrachud won't be able to reach anywhere as he neither has the required judicial authority nor the players have the gall to defy the diktats of the underworld that carries on the betting business. The 'organisations' that allegedly pay crores to the key players to throw a game can also pay an equal amount or even more to silence anybody.

Moreover, testifying the same before the law would be a major stumbling block. The bookies are too smart to ensure that they don't leave any trail which would be traced later. Unless four/five cricketers come out in the open, nothing can be done in this regard and we'll be left beating about the bush.

Sorry Shevlin, I don't agree with you in your statement that unless a thorough and impartial inquiry is done, the national passion for cricket will diminish rapidly. The hysterical cricket fans always expect India to win all the matches (despite: the dismal performances), and expect a Sunny Gavaskar or a

Sachin Tendulkar to hit a ton whenever they go in to bat, and above all, who are accustomed to the antier of our hypocritic al corrupt politicians and still elect them, are the least. knowledgeable lot amongst all the cricket-playing marions.

and the control of the control of the

We've accepted swindling of: thousands of crores by scanisters, ministers and godmen. What meaning does a lakh or two carry... as compared to them? Our national passion has something to do with our national character that is again based upon the national psyche. Need I say more?

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Sachio Tendulka: laifed the CANAN

Delighted

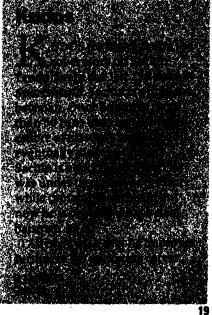
WAS delighted to see the December '97 issue of Sportsworld at a focal bookstall in Colombo. I was especially happy because it carried an article about the sport of diving.

I have been in the sport of diving for the past 24 years and it is disheartening to see that the sport continues to stagnate: in-South Asia particularly. We are even unable to include it alien

event in the SAF Games, because only India and Sri Lanka were the only two nations willing to participate (I think in order to qualify three countries need to participate).

It is important to inform/educate the sport enthusiasts in this region if we are to excel 'c competitively in this discipline.

Janaka biyanwila Colombo (Sri Lanka),



EAKLINGS wimps and doormats all around the world let out a collective cheer or should that be beep when the triumphant 1998 Australian Open men's chainpion. Petr Korda removed his shirt to reveal the physique of a Mr. Puniverse contestant.

What pleased everybody so much was the realisation that a man without pectorals and one who looks as if he had beach sand kicked in his face routinely, could give the ball such a fearsome wallop on his way to beating the best in the world

Another reason for barracking for Korda, The Human Toothpick, was the hope of seeing him do that marvellous exuberant scissor kicks with which he celebrates his victories

The outrageousness of the act may suggest that he is slightly whacky. But in today's world of tennis robots that is an admirable way to be

In a professional tour dominated by emotionless and boring ball returning machines, individuals who develop signature actions, fashions and looks which set them apart from the rest are more than welcome. Madonna wore her pointy bras. The Pope kissed airport runways (or used to until he became too frail—in Cuba recently they gave him a bowl of runway to kiss) Mick Jagger has his unmistakable strut Eddie Murphy made millions developing a laugh which sounded like a wash basin. emptying Jonty Rhodes dropkicks the ball after taking a catch

At the 1998 Australian Open the spectators got a kick out of Petr Korda Korda's kick which he appeared to have developed by combining a Cossack dance with the first movement of a startled emu-is one example of a breath of fresh air in the otherwise stale atmosphere of world tennis

Korda dedicated his three post-match scissor kicks to his former opponent and that master of all characters John McEnroe, sitting PHOTOGRAPHS COLORSPORT

courtside in the Channel 7 commentary box Before the game he had told McEnroe of the nervous 48 hours he had been through

Then he had added. "You know we are not battling for (sic) life So why not enjoy it? I think I will enjoy it from the first point to the last one"

It was a winning strategy from a player who has had to wait so long to savour his finest hour on a tennis court Moreover, it was a strategy which not many players on the ATP tour use, much to the disappointment of the spectators and to the detriment of the game

Until that sunny day in Melbourne, Korda was among a list of outstanding players never to have won a major And it would have been a tragedy had he retired without one which would have been the case had he followed his instincts last year

Korda knew he was running out of time 'My clock is at five minutes to 12," he kept telling people during the Championships and that was perhaps why he decided to just go for it

Ironically, the scoreline of his final against Marcelo Rios was a carbon copy of the 1989 Australian Open final when Ivan Lendl trounced Miloslav Mecir (also a Czech) to

HUMAN TOOTHP

Petr Korda played some incredible tennis to win the Aussin the twilight of his career, Korda brought a refreshing antics to the otherwise staid world of men's tennis



THE SWISS MISS NEVER MISSES

Running true to form and predictions, Martina Hingi no problem in retaining the Australian Open crown

Marble, Helen Wills
Moody, Margaret Court,
Martina Navratilova—a case
could be mounted for any of
them being the greatest tennis
player of all.

Yes, better than Bill Tilden, Fred Perry, Donald Budge, Pancho Gonzales, Rod Laver, Pete Sampras or any of the other male names which could be offered.

offered.

The argument would be fund but meaningless, as any ranking of players across the era always is, let alone comparisons of the sexes. In absolute terms, a good big or little man will always beat a good woman. The circus that the Williams sister staged during the recent Australian Open against Germany's Karsten Braasch, proved that, and more.

At her peak, Navratilova mused she'd would have liked to have tested herself against the world number 400 or 500-ranked man

It was speculated then that a good A. Grade player would beat the world's best woman.

Thankfully nothing came of Navratilova's idle thought. If a match had been played, nothing would have come of it just as nothing was obtained in the



Battle of the Sexes between Billing Jean King and Bobby Riggs: So what if a good A. Gradenhad beaten Navratilova?

It would only have proved that tennis is a sport in which the male of the species extra strength and stamina makes competition on a level court inappropriate.

It was inappropriate and unfortunate the brash Williams
Brassch farce established was played out. It only added to a sorry fortuight for the women's game.

The new Womien's Termis

Association boss Bart Ma Guire's call during the Australian Open for men's Grand Slam matches to be reduced to the best of three sets, received the appropriate ridicule.

It was as if the women not able to justify the light for equal prize money, were campaigning to cut the men's game back to a lower level to suit the female game.

It was the worst sort of shallow feminism and tokenism at work.

Ironically, the next day saw the worst women's Australian Open semi final in memory, the Lindsay Davenport-Conchita Martinez melange of mishits, missed serves and dropped serves.

Davenport, who is poised to challenge Martina Hingis, for the top ranking, will always answer; to the call "gifted but erraite" often in the one game. Mastinez is a second level player who has played her best matches. Yet that is what women's tennis has now been reduced to with the absence of Steffi Graf and Monica Seles.

The other semi final between Hingis and Anke Huber showed the other side of women's tennis. When Hingis sat courtside after losing seven straight games to Huber, she looked 17 going on 15.

As with many adolescents, her blotched face bespoke problems with acne and she smiled anxiously into the distance. Poor marks? Boy problems?

It seemed that the all-conquering queen of tennis was after all a prenty, vulnerable menager. Hingis changed tactics, tenuncal from the allyss and dominated. This was the same unyielding competitor who rules the million dollar sometimes overhyped coost. Hingis changed factics.

and dominated the rest of the sent hual and final

k iin'r a vacambaign belignd daar maile of heras Shery beligh tough as any Pete Sampras or any A Grader.

Tougher than the Williams sisters, who are unlikely to ever do full justice to their physical glits. Hyped as the best liner they picked up racqueta, they have lived impossible lives consumed by tennis and celebrity bood.

There once were stories total of a pre-pubescent Greek-bont.
Swiss girl too, but Hingis.
upbringing could not have been more different. The difference shows Hingis sometimes plays.

become the first Czech to win the Australian Open.

Korda, a ball boy when Lendl played Davis Cup for Czechoslovakia, turned 30 before the Championships, became the oldest Grand Slam finalist since Andres Gomez won aged 30 years and three months at Roland Garrows in 1990.

The final against Rios was as if two generations of players were meeting across the net. Rios is a young player with the face of a street fighter. Korda well, is not so young. His sharp features and toothbrush hairstyle give him the appearance of a cartoon character. Which is precisely the

against males for first time wife doesn't tell the world and it listuafor fun.

Atelating (her mettier; had better hope Hingh down it inseak the proverbial leg sould return on the four, because there is not much toughness besting her in the ranks.

Limit the next Hings comes along, seldom has one sport begre so dependent on the hid vising, one with maturity beyond her years.

Andy O'Brief, Atletrate

Marcelo Rios was totally outclessed in the Australian Open final. Will he ever get another chance like this?

point. You wouldn't believe you would be saying such a thing about Korda a few years ago. But such is the dearth of characters in the men's game that even a Korda will have to do.

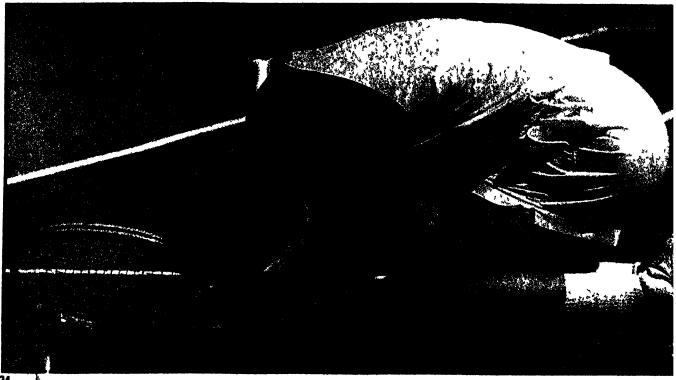
In a world dominated by honourable, but colourless men with dull characters we absolutely need individualists who do surprising things.

So send in the clowns. And the McEnroes, the Connors', the Kordas, and the loonies. ●

TEARS & CHEERS







This year's Australian Open saw most of the hot favourites (except Hingis) fall . If it was cheers for Hingis and Korda, it was tears for the rest. Presenting some pictorial evidence

(Extreme left) After a straight sets victory over Marcelo Rios, Petr Korda sought out the company of his wife Regina and daughter Jessica. Korda claimed that they inspired him to victory

(Left) Doing cartwheels. Korda just couldn't believe his dream run right through and this was his way of celebrating

(Bottom left) An emotional Korda just couldn't hold back his tears after the win and thanked Almighty for all the help and luck

(Right) For Martina Hingis three things come naturally: smiling, tennis and winning. Need we say more?

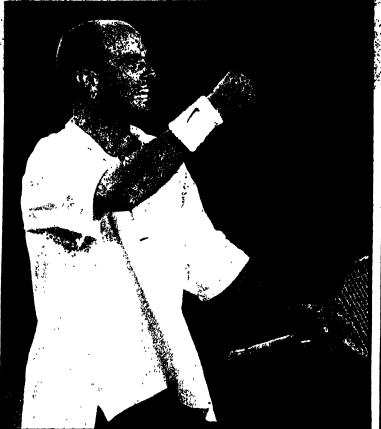
(Bottom right) Hingis the youngest ever player to defend a Grand Slam title successfully, shakes hands with Conchita Martinez whose hard work right through the Slam went in vain







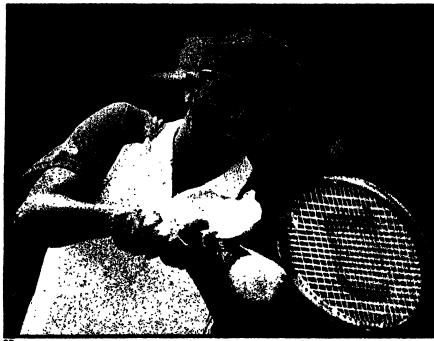
PHOTOFBATURE





(Top left) Andre they said would be back. He was. But Agassi could not pump himself up beyond the fourth round when he lost to Berasategui. His fans claim that the Andre magic is returning. Let's hope

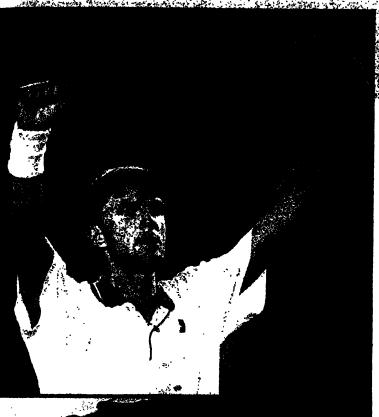
(Top right) The Aussies thought that the Woodies would salvage some pride for them but fate and the duo of Jonas Bjorkman and Jacco Eltingh had other plans. They wrested away the doubles trophy from the No.1 pair and left the Australians dejected

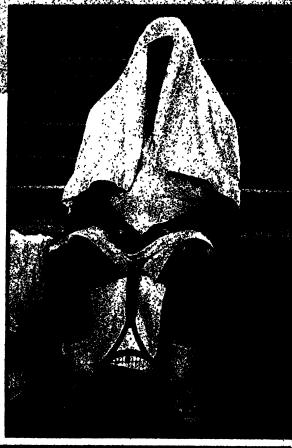


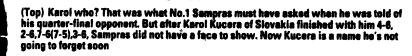
(Left) Nirupama Vaidyanathan become the first Indian woman to reach a Grand Slam event. However, she went no further than round two losing to Magdelena Grzybowska

(Right) Mary Pierce has a wide range of fans on the circuit. Here's how they came in Melbourne

(Extreme right) Normally, Anna Kournikova is a bubbly, spirited girl. But after the Swiss Miss sent her out in the third round, Kournikova was left wondering what went wrong











PHOTOFEATURE



MAT T



(Extreme left) The Australians expected a lot from Patrick Rafter who won the last Grand Slam of '97. Seeded No.2, Rafter lost to Alberto Berasategui of Spain, and with him was dashed the hopes of the Aussies

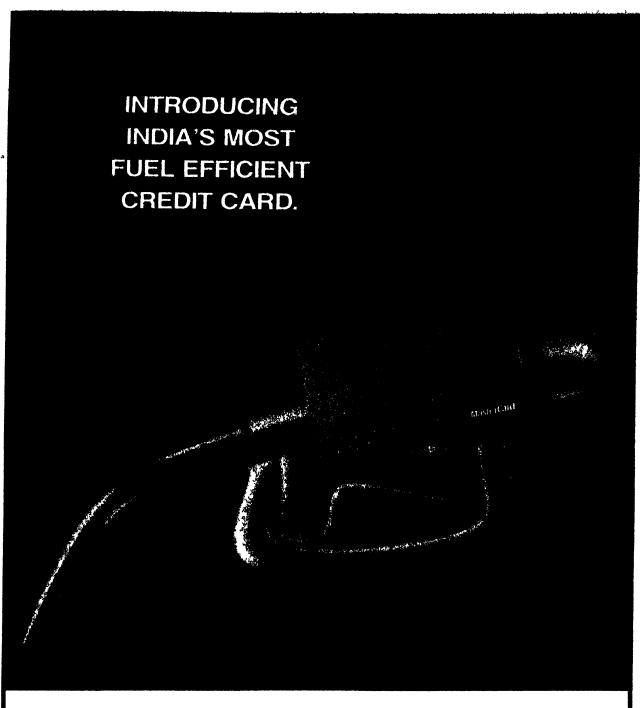
(Left) Michael Chang was always well received Down Under and is respected for his sheer doggedness. But at Flinders Park he could not proceed beyond the second round losing to Guillaume Raoux of France Here he bids a final adieu

(Right) Thomas The Terminator' Muster was shown the door by Jan Appell of Sweden in the first round itself Muster the 8th seed was in no mood to sign autographs after that

(Extrome Right) Pierce couldn't help shedding a few tears after she saw her dream of a repeat title in Melbourne go down the drain, thanks to a lady called Martina Hingis. That Hingis went on to become the champion will be of little solace to her







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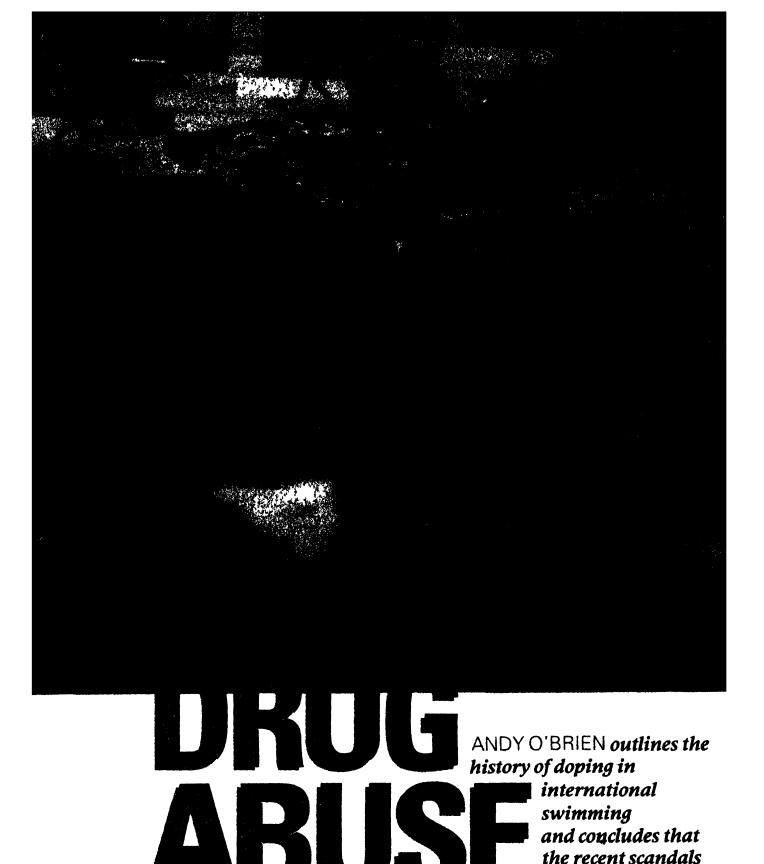
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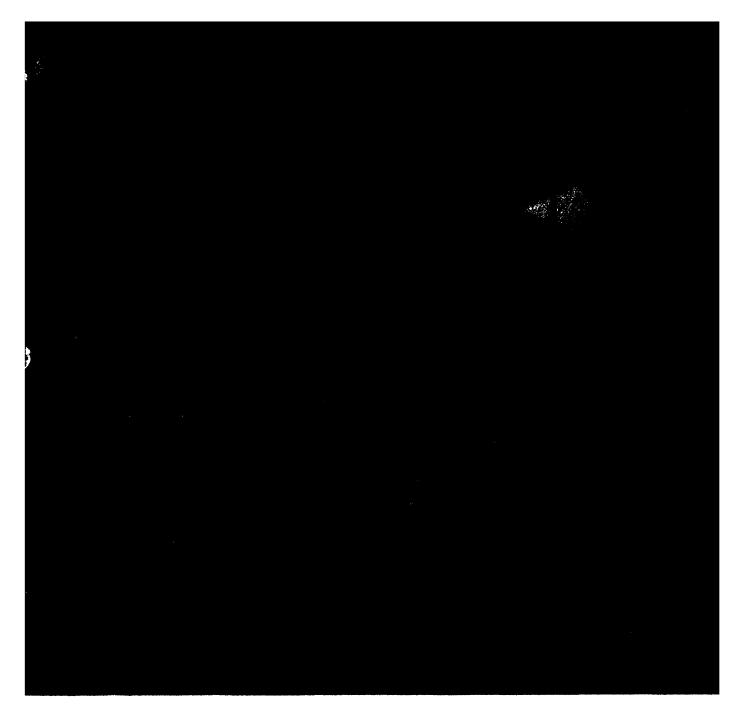
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World Swimming Championships happened because of FINA's reluctance to look at the problem in the eye

at the Perth



N years to come, the 1998 World Swimming Championships in Perth are likely to be remembered for only one thing: the fall of a despised Chinese swimming regime, after a brief but tempestuous international reign.

Yet sporting officials in this part of the world are looking at the Chinese drug scandal at the January aquatic meet as a blessing in disguise. In the wake of the exposure of widespread doping in Chinese swimming, the Sydney Olympic Games promises to deliver the cleanest Olympic competition for a quarter of a century. The price has been the tarnishing of the world titles in Perth, but the pay off has been thehope that the next time the world meets at the swimming pool, in Sydney, competition will be fairer.

"I guess if there had to be a controversy of this nature I much rather it happened at Perth in 1998 than at Sydney in 2000", Sydney's Olympics Minister Michael Knight observed when the doping scandal broke at the Perth poolside.

But doping had become a central

issue of the 1998 world championships well before the Chinese team landed in the capital of Western Australia. It began when the German team arrived with their manager Winfried Leopold, who is under investigation by the Berlin Prosecutor's officer for his part in the former East German doping system.

The Chinese, widely suspected of following the East German example, walked into the middle of it all when it was already a growing furore. When a human growth hormone was found in the bag of one of the Chinese

4,

IS MICHELLE SMITH CLEAN?

At Barcelona, she was a non-entity in the pool. Four years later, she surprised the world swimming fraternity by winning three gold medals. The question was how?

SWIMMER Michelle Smith's three gold medals (and one silver) at the Atlanta Olympics two years ago were so utterly unexpected that, in a cynical sports era in which failure seems the only defence to drug-use claims, her achievements will forever be under suspicion.

Her absence from the Perth World Championships this year caused further suspicion that Smith had got what she wanted from Atlanta and stayed away fearing being caught with the prospect of losing all the popularity (and money) she achieved after Atlanta.

So suspicious is the world of Smith's Olympic achievements (in an age of specialisation, not many people win three gold medals in different events) that the multiple champion has only won fame in her native Ireland.

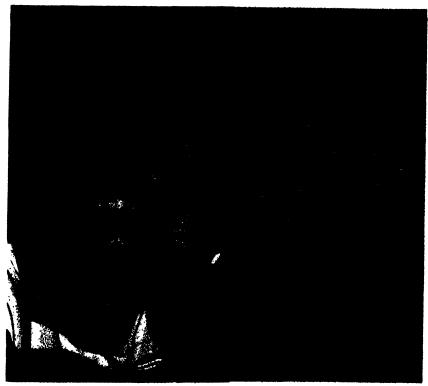
At Atlanta, many tried to portray her as a monstrous creation of the pharmaceuticals industry. Smith's life since Atlanta has been a mixture of local adoration and universal condemnation.

She retreated into the embrace of an adoring homeland and offered the impression that life after Atlanta was one long tickertape ride through the affections of the Irish people.

She ate a takeaway burger in the back of a Rolls Royce and presented a prize to the Aga Khan at the races. Her golden perm has twinkled in shampoo advertisements. There was fanciful talk of Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise playing her and her husband in the blockbuster first

week of the 1996 Olympics. President Bill Clinton told her not to worry about the "crap" (his word) she was taking from the world media, and asked her to send a T-shirt to Chelsea Clinton at the White House. Bill Cobs wrote her a poem and the wife of Johnny

When Smith returned from Atlanta she was met by the Irish President, Mary Robinson, who stood on a red carpet in the rain. She was given an open-topped bus ride into Dublin and was feted by the public who would listen to none of the skeptical whispers of



Weismuller (Olympic champion, better known as Tarzan and the first man to break the one-minute barrier for the 100m swim) sent her a card to say how proud the Weismuller family was of her. Politicians fell over each other in the race to the telex machine to share in her "historic achievement". All this for a swimmer from a country which has no full sized pool and never had a swimmer in an Olympic final.

an American media jury, who inquired about drugs only when the winner was from that hazy terrain known as abroad.

Ireland has precious little Olympic conquerors and Smith increased the country's tally of golds by fifty per cent.

Before her, Irish swimmers would ask the winners of their events for autographs. Gary O'Toole—one of the few to predict that Smith would win gold at

Atlanta—was considered a freak when he finished second in the 1989 European Championships.

The Irish inhabit an island with a wondrous craggy coastline, yet they retreat from water like cats. The legend goes that Smith fell in love with it as a child on camping trips to the Wexford coast and at the age of two, sat under a running tap just to immerse herself in water.

Suddenly there was all those medals clanking together on the parade through Dublin. Suddenly there was interest in a sport that some Irish say is as compelling as watching icicles forming.

Did all this adoration make her feel that the questions about drugs and her dramatic emergence in Atlanta had finally subsided?

She would like to think so, that nobody can touch her now. She is highly educated, had a culturally rich childhood and is utterly natural and unforced under the public gaze.

But will the rest of the world leave her alone? Can Smith ever compete again at the international level without being hounded by the ghosts of Atlanta? Her absence from the Perth titles (officially due to injury) perhaps indicated an answer. Smith has not participated at any major event since Atlanta.

Her triumphs in the water were of the most complicated type. They presented the very modern conundrum of a drastically improved performer surpassing all reasonable expectations.

At Barcelona, fours years before Atlanta, she finished 26th out of 32 in one race, 32nd out of 37th in another and 35th overall in the third. At 26, in Atlanta, she was past a swimmer's prime.

"She wondered if she would ever realise the potential flowing through her veins," runs the account in her biography. "Then she met a Dutch thrower. The rest, as they say, is history."

The Dutch discus thrower is Eric de Bruin, and he served a four-year ban from athletics. Before the 1993 World Championships, a dope test on him showed abnormal levels of testosterone and other substances. The two met in the athletes' canteen at the Barcelona Olympics and de Bruin became Smith's full-time coach and instituted a punishing training program that changed everything from diet to sleeping patterns. On the day of their wedding, Smith trained from 5 am to 8 am, had a sleep in the



Michelle Smith with US President Bill Clinton after winning the women's 400m individual medley

afternoon and returned to the pool for two hours in the evening.

The improvement really became noticeable in 1994 at the Rome World Championships. Smith says that by then she was swimming six hours a day. She broke Irish records 26 times that year and began a rapid ascent through the rankings.

The core of her defence on the improvement that she showed in Atlanta is that she had been progressing steadily for four years. It was just that nobody had noticed. The row in Atlanta was such that the American Embassy in Dublin issued a statement of support. The Atlanta inquests are now the stuff of journalistic folklore. The methods were brutal, but the questions themselves were justified.

"Can you answer in one word if you have ever taken performance-enhancing drugs," was the most famous example.

"No. I have never used performance-enhancing drugs," Smith answered.

A posse of reporters set out to interview her parents, friends and past coaches.

After the 200m individual medley final not one of her opponents swam over to congratulate her and the American Janet Evans said, "Yeah, it's a little surprising because it's kind of out of nowhere. There are suspicions and accusations out there...It's a topic of conversation on the pool deck."

Ireland's attitude to her is that she was subjected to a witch-hunt but nothing came of it. The cold truth about Smith is that her achievements will never be universally recognised. It would be tempting to say that this is a curse of the modern Olympian in a sport which has been tainted by drugs over two decades. Yet no such suspicion—in America, at least—attaches itself to other multiple medal winners like Michael Johnson.

At Atlanta, Smith had said, "For every American girl who is tested once, I am tested five times." Will Michelle Smith ever return to the pool to wash her self clean of all the accusations?

Andy O'Brien, Perth

swimmers at Sydney Airport
Customs, the effect was like throwing
gunpowder onto a naked fire.
Thirteen vials of the hormore
somatropin (banned as a
performance-enhancing substance)
were discovered in a thermos flask in
the luggage of Yuan Yuan, a silver
medallist in the 1994 world
championships Somatropin is high
on the International Olympic
Committee's banned list, although no
tests have yet been developed to
detect it.

When journalists approached the executive director of the International Swimming Federation, Cornel Marculescu, with the news, he was shocked. For days FINA had been dealing with the German drug issue and now he was being told something wildly improbable but certain to create a fresh furore.

"You are destroying your own house," he told the Australian journalists. In successive days, as the drugs issue gained momentum, leading FINA officials repeated his plea to the media to concentrate on the sport and not on the drugs.

But doping has been undermining the foundations of swimming for decades, to the point that no world competition in recent memory has been free of festering suspicion.

As Canadian head coach Dave Johnson noted in Perth, swimming, particularly women's swimming, lost its innocence and one of the basic tenets of sport in the early 1970s since the rise of the East German doping regime. Swimming has since been unable to offer the athletes a level playing field. The cancer of performance-enhancing drugs has steadily caten away at the sport's integrity.

For 15 years, from the 1973 world championships to the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, the swimming world suspected privately that the brilliant East German sporting machine was steroid-propelled. There was never any proof, just suspicions, rumours and the certainty of experienced swimming coaches and officials, who has spent years on the pool deck, that

the performance patterns were unnatural.

There was the remarkable contrast between outstanding female performances (steroid abuse has a greater effect on women because they have lower levels of testosterone) and mediocre men, there was the physical shape of the women, the development of Adam's apples and facial hair, the deep voices of teenaged girls. Few people spoke out publicly to condemn the East Germans. Those that did, such as American Olympic swimmer Shirley Babashoff, who won a silver medal at the 1976 Montreal Games, were savaged as poor losers. In the uneasy silence that remained, East Germany flourished, winning 28 Olympic gold medals in women's swimming from 1976 until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Then the truth began to come out. To their dismay, the doubters discovered that even their strongest suspicions underestimated the strength and sophistication of the East German system.

There was enormous relief that a demon had been exorcised, but within one short Olympiad, another spectre was on the horizon.

The same signs which had sparked such disbelief about East Germany began to emanate from another country, one which had no tradition of swimming excellence. Chinese swimming had entered the game.

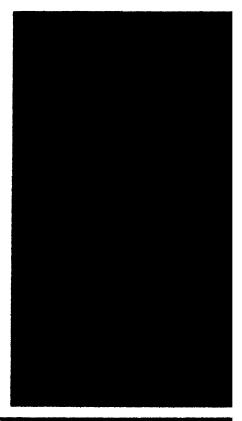
From a beginning of a handful of minor medals at the 1988 Olympics. China grew within six years to overfill the East German space. By 1994 the Chinese women were so strong that they won 12 of the 16 gold medals on offer at the Rome World Swimming Championships.

But there was none of the muted reaction, which greeted East Germany in the earlier years. Coaches such as the famous Australian Don Talbot had held their tongues before but their gut instincts had been right. There was a fresh determination that the leading swimming nations would not be conned again. Coaches and swimmers witnessed and reported incidents in Rome where the Chinese swimmers

attempted to evade drug tests. They spoke openly of their concerns and signed a widely circulated petition calling on FINA to act on cleaning up the sport.

Proof of their claims came within a month. The all-conquering Chinese team arrived in Hiroshima for the Asian Games and was drug tested by surprise. The result was seven positive drug tests for steroids. Included among them were world 400m champion Yang Aihua and 200m silver medallist Lu Bin. The Pan-Pacific charter nations (Australia, the USA, Canada and Japan) decided not to invite China to the 1995 edition of their championships at Atlanta in protest against its suspect system.

By 1996, (and at the Atlanta Olympics) the Chinese swimmers were a shadow of their former strength. The world 100m freestyle record holder Le Jingyi (remember the V-shaped lady in the black swim costume!) was the only one to retain her pre-eminence winning her country's only gold medal in the pool. The criticism of China began to ebb, but it was in the middle of 1997 that



Talbot, the longest-standing elite coach in the world, warned that it was too quiet on the doping front, that his instincts told him something was happening.

That something was revealed at the Chinese National Games in Shanghai in October last year, when Chinese swimmers Wu Yanyan and Chen Yan, broke the world records for the 200m and 400m individual medley, two world records widely assumed to be drug-enhanced themselves. East German Petra Schneider had held the 400m mark for 15 years, while China's Lin Li was the former record holder over 200m. With remarkable performances, other Chinese swimmers flooded into the upper reaches of world rankings in numbers unseen since 1994.

Late last year, the two most influential swimming magazines in North America, Canada's SwimNews and US-based Swimming World combined to produce the "Swigming Hall of Shame", listing all the positive drug tests in the history of the sport.

In this decade, 28 Chinese swimmers have been caught after

committing doping offences, while in the history of swimming 30 swimmers from the rest of the world have given positive tests.

Even taking into account the population of a nation which has a quarter of the world's people, the statistics suggest that doping is occurring there at a rate out of all proportion to anywhere else.

Yet even before their arrival in Australia for the January world titles, Chinese swimming officials declared their swimmers to be "clean". FINA officials caught the cheats at a morning training session in Perth after being refused access to the swimmers the previous evening.

The standard response by the Chinese Swimming Association has been unchanged since the first questions were raised about its doping record. Yuan Jaiwei, the association's general secretary, repeated the same line in Perth after four more swimmers tested positive, this time for a banned drug used commonly as a masking agent for steroids.

"The doping problem is not only in China. We need to join hands to make

efforts to make the sport clean,"
he said. "The doping problem (in
China) is an individual one, and
should not be taken as a collective
one," he added, ignoring the fact that
14 of the 23 Chinese swimmers share
club links with the five who were
suspended since their arrival in
Australia.

While the argument that doping is an international problem is designed to deflect criticism, there is truth to it. Even if the Chinese swimming team was banned entirely from the Sydney Olympics (and many of the world's leading coaches had called for that after the Perth fiasco) it would be naive to suggest that the swimming competition would be entirely clean.

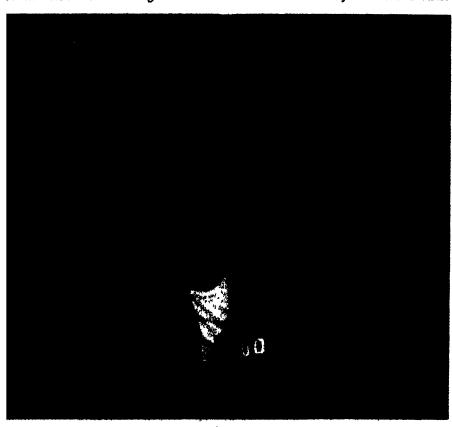
There are undoubtedly instances of drug abuse in every part of the world as illustrated by the suspension of three leading Russian swimmers in December 1997 after they tested positive for steroids at a training camp in Cyprus.

But isolated cases of doping have not had the devastating effect on the sport that systematic doping has. A single swimmer cannot dominate the world and change the course of the sport's history. The Atlanta Olympics aqua queen, Ireland's Michelle Smith is an example of that (See Box). A single nation—East Germany—has in the past and has the potential to inflict mortal wounds on the sport's credibility by snuffing out the dreams of generations of swimmers.

If FINA does not allow exposure of the sport's ills, swimming will not be deflected from a path that leads to annihilation.

Yef, as important as the Perth doping revelations were, the resilience of the competition in the pool was equally vital to the sport's future.

Going into the championships, many coaches voiced fears it would be another Rome, where the women's competition would become a travesty. Instead, by the exposure of the doping scandal Perth seems likely to prove a watershed, the moment when swimming perhaps stepped back from the brink.





YOURMONEY

Both on and off the field you can be con WASIM AKRAM providing you with non-stop excitement

AURAV GANGULY, the stylish Indian left-hander who these days is milking runs off every bowler, observed in Sharjah during the Champions Trophy, that of all the bowlers he had faced, Wasim Akram was up "there" in his book. The softspoken young man from Calcutta was speaking during the lunch break in the Pakistan and India encounter. Ganguly had been bowled in the Indian innings by Akram in the nervous nineties. Though the disappointment of missing a well-deserved hundred was there, he believed that particular ball would . have got any left-hander in the world. "He (Akram) is difficult to comprehend; with every bell either he is trying something different, or else he keeps coming back at you at a negging length; only changing his pace to force a false stroke from you.

According to Ganguly he had not en many bowlers of the calibre of Akrem. Tiaced Allen Donald at his fastest its South Africa, then Curtiey Ambrose and Courtney Walsh in the Caribbean, but Wasim is so damin difficult to read even after you have played him over a period of time."

Such high praise coming from enindian would make any Pekisteni player flepird. But such is the

the cricket authorities and selectors in Pakistan have time and again toyed around with Akram's career. The most recent instance was when he was initially dropped from the team to South Africa and Zimbabwe. The selectors and the Board alleged that Akram was unfit, whereas, he kept insisting on his litness. After much hue and cry he was reinstated into the team in time for the third Test against South Africa.

Clearly something mysterious is going on behind the scenes. Sadly, it is Pakistan cricket which is the loser, But in a way are the Board's actions really surprising? Because the fact chmains: that despite having no real poers as a fast bowler and despite leading Pakistan to some famous victories: Akram has never really been able to command the same respect and standing in the public eye as did Imran Khan and Javed Mianded.

What is more tragic is that eyer since he withdrew from the World Cup quarter-linal against india at Bangalore in March 1996, his hame has openly been lighed to a grade fixing marches and placing bers on them, whenever Paktsian has his And this now apparently fire got to him in a big way, as the day repeatedly been calling for a high level juditisy ling all the allegations to clear his thing offer god for all and bring the alternations a conclusive case. And the section is the

marches, and 341 One day International wickets, Akrain really does not have to prove his class to all one. As is evident in the following interview the hurt and humilianor rankles deep inside him.

What do you have to say about the constant (unsubstantlated) allegations about you and so other players being involved in fixing matches...

Lock I am fed up with such allegation they are hurring me and my family. Not only that, look at the players the the team, and you can see they are upset and scared. How do you expen them to give their best in such conditions? I took the decision of never leading Pakistan again: because under the prevailing droumstance would never have been able to do justice to my job. When I can? motivate myself, why should from the best from my players?

These allegations are all rubbished what hurts is that attacklying so much to Pakistan in the last ters years, the cricket authorities are keeping stens and in fact are sliently giving credence to such malicions stories. I say hold a high level induity into these allegations. Appoint a there member probe committee of Supreme Court judges, who carry out the inquity Independently. Call the players have been making the allegations

cross-examine them. Pind out the iroth, I have even offered the Board to check all my bank accounts and assets and find out how much I have earned since I started playing cricket.

Learn enough money from county cricket, different endorsement deals and as a Pakistan player. There is also plenty of security and perks from my Job in PIA. So why would I need to fix matches, or take part in gambling, or betting. Even if these allegations are true, will someone tell me how can I or two players ffx a match and decide on its final outcome. It is just not possible in a team game.

And if you say the Pakistan teamis involved in fixing matches, then everyone is involved in it. Under my captaincy we won the series in England, the Sahara Cup in Toronto, the World Series (for the dies time) in Australia: we also benedied West indies 3-0 in a Test series, we we are secused of fixing matches left all hubbles.

There were reports that your father had been kidnepped by some buckles demanding cansus modevi

We did get threatening calls at my residence, but my father was never kidnapped; a newspaper carried such a story without confirming the facts. I have been getting threats and crank calls since the last World Cup. Minish because the media has played up these allegations about a match being fixed.

officials and less on grant and services All this has you nespect, spilet had been washed some people into believing the acquestions.

Wesley when Seleet Melik was dropped from the team languages after the last Sahara Cup the Board officials made it obvious he was ousted because chief Selector Salcem Altai, who was with the team in Toronto had confirmed his suspicions about Malik being involved in fixing some of the matches. Yet after the passage of so much time, since his sudden ouster, Malik has never tried to defend himself, or take on the Board and fight what he



a for processes and magic as cambring why go through all the passies of fighting the Board legally or otherwise, when they don't need me At the same time, in 1995 when the Australians accused him of offering them a bet to lose a Test in Rangchi and the ad-hoc committee subsequently suspended him. he did go to court and won his case and was selected again.

What was your reaction when you heard that you were being dropped?

Honestly speaking. It does get to a stage where after serving your country diligently for so long, you start wondering why go through all the bother of having to fight battles puiside the field to remain in the team when they know well that the team. still needs your experience and skills. The second of the State

If you were not sent to SA and Zimbabwe, what were you planning to do?

I certainly would not have ended my career for Pakistan in this fashion and so prematurely. I believe I am good enough to pass the 400 wackets mark in both varieties of cricket, but this year, my county Lancashire have given me a benefit and upon September, it would have taken up all my time organising benefit diment. lunches promotend what not.

By the way, if I was earning from tialing matches, clion t think i would minuscrate receipt from my other th **vear**



dde again, it offered the fob. when conditions are more conductive.

So you are praying for the circumstances to improve maybe even this cricket set up to change in the near facure?

Well itseway things have been going on in recent times, someone britis Government is bound to take notice. personally don't think this Board will last for long. They have done nothing The part of the pa to relax the players and increase that

I want to clarify one thing in the build-up to the quarter-final after the arrived in Bandalore, I was very keep to play against India and I told Dan (Klasel, Pekisten's physio), i would play even if I was 80 per cent fit. Like discussed the matter with Intikhab Alam and he knew about the shuare

We decided not to make public that there were chances of me not pleasing due to injury, as this would have a ve the Indians's morale boost well it the quarter linals and would have lowered the morale of our being Before the match was threat. The gave me a couple of injection of the Lord did not work. I just ornis not rule; over my bowling strik arguette as the end, intikhae dies ringigens was better to take a crame with a pair it bowler, that in takes a risk with a half th Wasin, it called that overyone was disappointed at lighting the quarter disast said there had to be a scapegore to disc excuses for the deless. Children salely they made the de propertie

And all and the Pennsylven

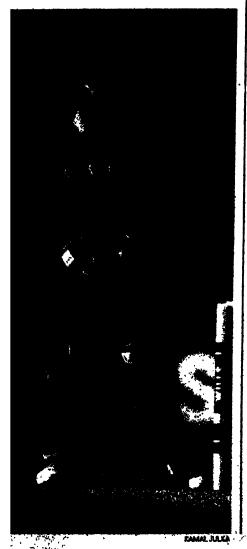
PLAYING MUSICA

The Pakistani cricket captaincy has changed hands 30 times in only 16 seasons

T is the sort of feat which should 'walk' into the pages of the Guinness Book of World Records. Unfortunately it is not the sort of an achievement which Pakistan can be proud of, or make any other team enviable.

The truth, in this case, is certainly stranger than fiction. Believe it or not,

Reshid Letif: the 11th men to be made the Pakistani captain in 18 years



THE CAPTAINS'ROSTER

The following is the list of the players who have led Pakistan from the beginning of the last decade

* 1981-82: Javed Miandad is ousted in a coup by some fellow players who refused to play under him. Imran Khan takes over the reins for the first time on the tour of England.

* 1983-84: Imran, having suffered a stress fracture of the shin, unable to bowl in the World Cup in England, is replaced by Zaheer Abbas for the three-Test tour of India.

Selectors retain Zaheer as captain for tour of Australia but Board chief Nur Khan sacks selectors and reappoints Imran. Injured Imran plays only two Tests and that too as a batsman.

Zaheer becomes captain again vs England at home.

- * 1984-85; Zaheer leads vs India and NZ at home before stepping down citing 'mental exhaustion'. Miandad back in the saddle for the tour of New Zealand: Pak lose 2-0.
- * 1985-86: Miandad retains captaincy vs 5ri Lanka, winning 2-0 before stepping down in favour of a fit-again Imran (vs WI at home and tour of Sri
- * 1986-87; Imrain retains captaincy vs WI at home (1-1) and the tour of India (1-0).
- 1987: Imran leads Pakistan to victory vs England in England for the first time (1-0).
- * 1987-88; limran quits after Pak loses to Australia in Reliance Cup semis. Miandad leads Pakistan to 1-0 win over England at home.

Imran returns to lead Pak to WI (1-1) after a personal request from President Zia-ul-Haq.

- * 1988-89: Miandad isada Pakistan at home ya Australia as imran opta out saving weather too hot to play in Palditan. Imran returns to lead Pak in
- WSC in Australia and Test series in NZ (0-0).

 W1929-90 tourn leads to sodil at light to 90 and tout of Australia (0-1). 1990-91: Imrae refuses to play at second-rate NZ minus Richard Hadice, John Wright and subers, Mishdad leads Pair to 3-0 win in NZ.

imran returns at lead vs VI () : * 1991 - 2.1: Anton leads faithann at I-0 victory at home vs Sri Lanka Leads validation Work Cop thomps despite suffering from a shoulder

1992 Administration of the second of the sec

CHAIRS

in the last 16 seasons, the Pakistan cricket captaincy changed hands 30 times with 11 different players taking turns to lead the national team—some with great success while

others only stared at defeat.

Except for brief periods in which Imran Khan led from the front, it has always been turbulent times for Pakistan cricket.

* 1992-93: Miandad captain in NZ (1-0).

Wasim Akram named captain for tour of West Indies (0-2). Miandad complains of shabby treatment, but persuaded to tour.

* 1993-94: Pak beat Zimbabwe 2-0. Waqar Younis leads in the first Test as Wasim is injured.

A players' revolt against Wasim's domineering captaincy sees Salim Malik take over charge in NZ (2-1).

* 1994-95 Pak led by Sälim Malik defeats Sri Lanka 2-0 and Australia 1-0. But Shane Warne, Mark Waugh and Tim May accuse Malik of offering them bribes.

He leads again on tour of South Africa (0-1) and tour of Zimbabwe (won 2-1) and amid more bribery allegations is replaced by Moin Khan for the Asia Cup in Sharjah.

Moin contracts chicken pox and Saced Anwar takes over the captaincy in the last match.

* 1995-96: Ramiz Raja is recalled from wilderness after a gap of over two years and is made captain. Leads vs Sri Lanka at home, loses 1-2 and is removed from captaincy.

Akram made captain against for tour of Australia (1-2) and New Zealand (1-0).

Also leads in the Wills World Cup. But drops out of the crucial quarter final game vs India with a rib injury. Sohail leads Pak in the game. Loses,

1996: Sohail leads Pak in Singer Cup in Singapore which Pak wins, but fails to qualify for the finals in the subsequent meet in Sharjah.

Akram back in charge on the tour of England. Leads Pak to 3-2 win over India in the inaugural edition of the Sabara Cup in Toronto. Goes to Nairobi's quadrangular meet, but pulls out after just one game due to father's illness. Saced Anwar fills in.

* 1997: Akram back again at the helm in the home series against Zimbabwe, Sharjah meet and helps Pak win the WSC in Australia and leads Pak in NZ and also in the Champions' Trophy in Sharjah.

Ramit Raja retains captaincy again for the Independence Cup in India as
Akram pulls out citing county commitments. Pak lose to SL in the final but
Raja leads again in the Asia Cup and Sahara Cup where Pak is himsiliated
by India 4-1.

Raja loses captaincy. Anwar takes over for the three-match series vs India. Pak win 2.1 Anwar loses Test series vs South Africa.

Altram back as captain in the quadrangular meet. Crushes WI 1-0 in the Test setter, but march-fixing charges surface as Pakistan lose badly in Champions Trophy in Sharjali.

1996: Easthid Lettif makes a comeback as a player and is also named appeals for has gladesh a independence Cup. Pak lose to india in the final salif supersol. Solial liseds Va. Salifa Salifa

Captains have been changed for a variety of reasons. They ranged from players' revolt, to bribery charges," from illness and injury to ego problems. Pakistan cricket has seen it all.

There was this unique instance, when the Pakisten Board chief Nur. Khan had sacked the entire selection committee for giving Zaheer Abbas the reins instead of Imran whom he reappointed later.

In 1987-88 President General Zia-ui Haq publicly requested Imran to come out of retirement to lead Pakistan, and Imran obliged.

Imran himself relinquished the captaincy no less than six times during his remarkable career, but returned each time to pick up the reins. In 1990-91, he refused to play versus what he termed as a "second rate" New Zealand side without the likes of Richard Hadlee, John Wright and others. And in 1988-89 he made himself unavailable for the home series versus Australia saying the weather in Pakistan was too hot to play cricket at that time of the year.

Wasim Akram himself has lost the captaincy (or stepped down)

five umes.

Javed Miandad, one of the finest thinkers in the game and an extremely shrewd player with a fine track record as a leader was ousted in a players' coup in 1981-82.

Akram was the victim of a similar incident after the tour of Zimbabwe in 1993-94. Only, his successor Salim Malik did not last long, after being accused of offering bribes to Australian players in the 1994-95 home series

Such has been the frequency of change in leadership in the Pakistan ranks that almost every player who made his mark during the last 16 years also got to become the Pakistan captain

Ijaz Ahmed and Inzamam-ul-Haq are in the queue. Their time will come. For, uneasy lies the head which wears the Pakistani captain's crown.

Rashid Latif knows that only too well.

Sumit Mukherpe

POISON IN THE

For years, Indian sports have been manned by officials who have cared little for the sport or the

WEL

players. Enjoying the perks of office has been the only objective. Will things ever change?

UANE mey bhang (poison in the well) 'This is what is emphasised by dedicated and selfless observers who have been regretfully watching the systematic decline in sports discipline and the values of sportsmanship

Who is to blame for this dismal situation?

The main culprits are the politicians the bureaucrats and the firmly-entrenched office-bearers of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the important national sports federations

These officials have spread corruption all over they have destroyed the very fibre of Indian sports. It is these officials who are to blame for players resorting to unethical practices and unscrupulous transactions, including bribery, betting and fixing of matches.

Since Independence, the Indian

sports history reveals that many officials have continued in their posts till their death. They have had the best of both worlds. They have exploited innocent players for their own personal gains. There are several instances of officials adopting crude methods of nepotism. An official, for example, had deaf and dumb athletes, wearing the Indian blazer, begging on the streets of New York. All the money collected was pocketed by the official. When such things take place is there any hope of a renaissance taking place?

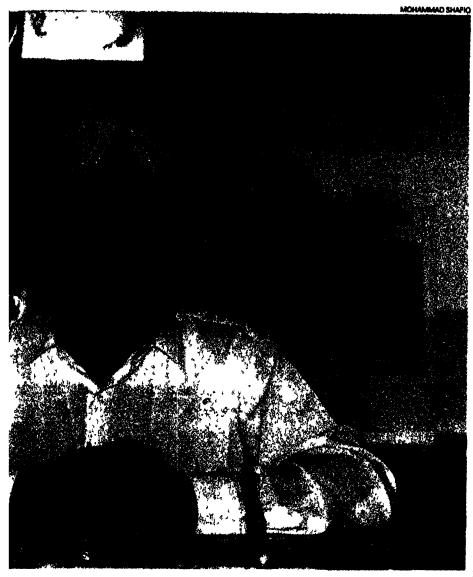
Before big money entered Indian sports through TV the officials from the district stage to the national level hung on to their offices for 'Bharat darshan', the occasional international jamboorees and for a few fringe benefits. Now officials are lucratively paid as they possess value in the form of votes. In the last few elections of the IOA, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and some other important federations, the value of the vote has been assessed as between Rs 3 and 5 lakh.

There are instances of officials

accepting air fares from both the rival factions for election-meetings. An official, who may have no clue about sports, still represents his state in 10-15 national federation meetings. He gets aligned with one group or the other, at a price in cash or kind. A former secretary of the Services Sports Control, for example, was out of his office for more than 200 days in a year for hockey work at home or abroad.

Another official, (a former cricketer), of the same unit accompanied the Indian athletic team abroad as a manager at the expense of an athlete. There are more misdeeds than deeds committed or enacted by the officials, who are guilty of polluting the Indian sports atmosphere.





In the last IOA election, Suresh Kalmadi became the president because he had enough funds to buy votes at any price. What was most shocking was that B.S. Adityan's trusted soldiers voted against him, because of the lure of money. When asked, an official of the Kalmadi group said: "We repeated only what Adityan had done in the previous elections."

Before Adityan won, five years ago, the IOA meeting was adjourned because of "Olympian vulgarity at Madras" in June 1990. Here is a descriptions of that meeting: ".... What followed next was a traumatic experience. It was perhaps the saddest and the darkest moment of Indian sports. As the president of the Andhra Pradesh Olympic

Association came to exercise his vote, the ballot papers were snatched, the ballot box was thrown away and someone hit the court observer.

"A free-for-all ensued. The police, now in much larger strength, used lathis to chase away those who tried to disrupt the proceedings. Some IOA delegates were beaten up. Tempers ran high. Supporters of the Shukla faction accused the Adityan faction for calling in the police and getting honourable members of the house roughed up."

Similar vulgarity has continued unabated. Even more well-known disciplines, like cricket and badminton, are facing unprecedented crises. A few years ago, two teams, one supported by players and the another

by Mr.Rungta, turned up for a Ranji Trophy match. Had the powers __that-be in the BCCI played the 'ball' correctly, the players' movement in Rajasthan would have succeeded and the Board would have got rid of Mr.Rungta.

The IOA is indeed the apex body in the country. But it is no longer supreme in traditions and fair play. It is a kind of 'mafia' that has been ruling the country's sports. Just as the Congress thought that India was its, the 'house of Patiala' feels that the IOA, in particular, and sports, in general, is its 'jagur'.

Except for one year (1927), when Sir Dorab Tata was the president, the IOA has been in the grasp of the 'Patiala house' Maharajahs. From Maharaja Bhupinder Singh to Maharaja Yadavendra Singh, the reign then passed on to Raja Bhalindra Singh. The latter, thankfully, ran the affairs of the IOA with the utmost dignity, decorum and a considerable amount of impartiality.

After Bhalindra Singh passed away, Randhir Singh became the IOA secretary. Unlike Bhalindra Singh, who was a talented cricketer in his youth, Randhir Singh specialised in shooting.

There was, however, a sharp difference between the father and the son. While the Raja was devoted to the Olympic movement, it cannot be said of Randhir Singh, who devotes little time to the affairs of the IOA.

Randhir Singh has been the secretary of the IOA since 1987. He was also secretary when B.S. Adityan was the president. After a short while, the two incumbents drifted away from each other. In the last elections, Randhir Singh aligned with the Kalmadi faction, which assumed power with a clear mandate. But all is not well with the IOA. There are bickerings within.

In all this infighting, Indian sport is suffering. That is why the slogan 'Nine hundred million people and no gold medal' will continue to echo through the years. If the sporting federations are not manned by the right people, there is very little hope that Indian sport will ever see a bright future.



等人在一种民族的形式或主流长行的新

UNDAPPA RANGANATH VISHWANATH's life these days are very quiet, mostly restricted to the serene environs of a golf course. There's absolutely no cricket except playing in some charity or benefit matches now and then.

The stylish batsman who delighted millions of cricket fans throughout the world with his delectable square cuts normally plays golf in the mornings before having a change at the Karnataka Golf Association to go to his office, State Bank of India where he works as a chief manager (commercial)

Of course, Vishy did enjoy his cricket too, nearly 20 years at the first-class level. "People might say I missed quite a few runs and hundreds. But I enjoyed my cricket, 14 years at the top rung without a break. I never played much one-day cricket, probably I would've enjoyed that too if I had played. Even though I played in two World Cups, one-dayers were not so frequent during my days," felt the Little Master.

In fact, after he was dropped from the Indian team Vishy played for a couple of seasons for his state team. "Those two seasons I had a chance but I couldn't come back. After that I was with the Karnataka team for two more seasons just to help encourage youngsters to come up. I did reasonably well then also," recalled Vishy.

Vishy is now very much serious with his golf. That's perhaps one way of keeping himself fit. And the golf kit can always be found in his car. He has been using Titanium clubs called Black Cat which he obtained from his friend in the United States while he was there last year.

How did he develop an interest in golf? "After I quit cricket, some of my friends who were already into golf insisted that I take up the game. I applied for a membership at the Bangalore Golf Club and Karnataka Golf Association I got one in KGA two years back. Before that I didn't want to

PPA VISHWANATH

Vishy, as he is known to one and all, joined the bank in the cricketers' quota in October 1968 when he was barely 19 years old. That was immediately after his Ranji Trophy debut in which he made a then Indian record score. Since then he has been loyal to the bank, not thinking of any change.

"The bank always encouraged me at every stage and has looked after me well. Even when I was a selector and whenever I play a veterans match these days the bank has been very kind to me," said the 49-year old Vishy. As he himself revealed, "If I were not happy I wouldn't have been with them for this long. I've got promotions at the right time and this is my 30th year."

Ask about his domestic life, pat comes the answer. "Basically, we're home birds. After I return from the bank I don't go out unless I have to. Otherwise, most of the time I'm at home with my wife Kayltha and my four-year-old son Daivik. We had our child after a long time, so whatever I missed out then I'm enjoying it now," Vishy explained.

PHOTOGRAPHS 8 V VIJA





play goli because I was not a member anywhere After becoming a member I became a regular and since then I've also played in BGC where I'm still expecting a membership, 'Vishy

said

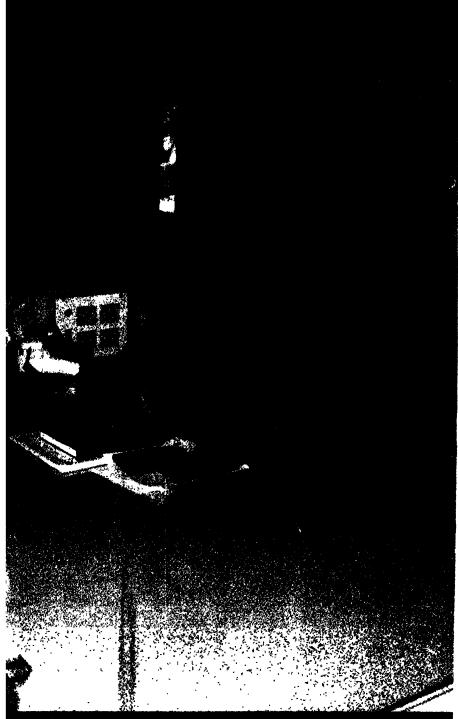
According to Vishy, he took up golf very late, very much after he quit cricket Hitherto, he had never played the game nor seen it much Also he hardly had any knowledge what the

game was all about Now Vishy has played in two or three Pro-Am tournaments with some of the professionals like Arjun Singh and Chiranjeev Milkha Singh He has not achieved any laurels so far but the teams he has represented have come close to winning a couple of times

"If I had known this game earlier, probably I would've jumped into it. I feel one can play golf at any stage and

it's not late for me So I'm playing seriously I'm quite regular in some of the local tournaments and even though I'm not winning I'm enjoying it And that's how I'm the course everyday It's not that easy to win anyway But participation itself gives me a lot of boost to keep going." Vishy looked cheerful about his golf

Vishy enjoyed whatever he did Like his cricket then and golf now,



At the State Bank of India office where he works as the chief manager (commercial

even a stint as a selector too in between. "It was a nice but tough assignment," Vishy revealed. "It's a thankless job which I knew it before. But I really enjoyed it. You've to pick only 14 or 15. And only those 14 or 15 will be with you and the rest are against. I believed in one thing: whenever I chose a team I was doing it true to my consciousness. And I used to really sleep well that night. I

enjoyed that stint as chairman of the selectors," Vishy conceded.

But then there were allegations that he promoted most of the Karnataka players during his tenure. Vishy replied, "Yes I did, because when I was heading the committee the other members also felt that those players from Karnataka were really good and their performances showed that. That's

how they were in. I didn't put any pressure on anyone, neither the committee not the players. I think everyone came on their own, not only those six or seven from Karnataka, but players from other states too. All performance-based and nothing else."

Vishy, however, felt it "a bit unfortunate" on the ouster of Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Prasad and Anil Kumble from the Indian squad About Prasad I heard that he was not fit and things like that. If that was the case, the selectors should have come out openly. But I see no reason in dropping Rahul. Well, Kumble did have his ups and downs. But still I don't think he should have been out of the side. And they're still searching for a replacement," Vishy observed.

Vishy can again get back to the selection panel if the Board wants him. He is also aware that there should be a year's break after finishing a four-year tenure. "But I can think of getting back to the selection committee only if athree-man panel is formed. I'm not for this zonal basis committee of five selectors," he reacted.

But for the selector's job which he got immediately after quitting the game Vishy would've been a coach now. "I wanted to take a break for a couple of years after retiring from cricket. But suddenly I got this assignment as a selector. Then I got into the chairmanship and I was there tor nearly six years. It was a full time job. I watched a lot of cricket and a lot of things happened during those years. That time I could not start my coaching camp which I wanted to. Now I'm just taking a break and looking forward to having my camp. probably a school team in Bangalore plus other outside boys. I even did a year's coaching job with the Brijesh Patel clinic," said Vishy.

Cricket shaped the career of this lilliputian gentleman. What he is today, it's because of the game, and to give back something in some form or the other he got into the selection committee. And now he's planning to have his own coaching camp. Good luck, Vishy.



WHAT French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten politely declined as a tribute in his hometown of Florianopolis, Brazil: A statue of him on a main thoroughfare.

Why the general editor of the Sunday Blick in Switzerland was fired. He didn't run Martina Hingis' victories prominently enough on the front page.

TENNIS player who appeared nude in a photo exhibit of top athletes and Olympians done by Herb Ritts and commissioned by Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer: Boris Becker.

WHAT Pam Shriver predicts will be the tennis story of 1998: Steffi Graf's comeback.

How much practice-court time 1997 U.S. Open champion Patrick Rafter puts in compared to his Australian Davis Cup teammate Mark Philippoussis, according to 1960s Australian star Fred Stolle: "Three times as much."

WHAT Pete Sampras and actress Kimberly Williams did on their first date: They went hiking together.

How John McEnroe describes today's leading men tennis players: As "a boring bunch of clones."

HAT USTA president
Harry Marmion
proclaimed "is the best thing
that has happened to
American tennis for the last,

20 years": Venus Williams.

PERSONAGE who phoned to congratulate Amanda Coetzer after she reached the semifinals at the 1997 French Open: South African President Nelson Mandela.

ADDRESS of the Thomas Muster Fan Club: c/o Giovanna Gaudio, via Galieno 46, 80053 c/Stabia (Na), Italy.

1/2 tennis shoes that Anna Kournikova goes through per year: 50 to 60,

Number of publishers who told the late Arthur Ashe, who wrote the acclaimed trilogy Hard Road to Glory, that nobody really cared about the history of the black athlete—before Warner, Books published it: About 20.



La CAT Animal sector

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Sees Greg Rusedakt his his
his first two service games
issainst Lionel Roux arche
Stockholm Open: 8:

A good tennis player, according to all-time great Chris Evert: "A strong mind, good hand-eye co-ordination and footwork."

WHY the host U.S. had to apologise to Romania in the 1971 Davis Cup final: The U.S. played the wrong Romanian nutional anthemusing the pre-Communist version.

VY HAT 17-year-old V Venus Williams, who hasn't won a pro lournament yet, always has at every tournament: "A little acceptance speech in my mind just in case [I win it]."

TATHO TV analyst Johns
V McEnroe once said
were not rational people
"Press people."

WHAT Peter Sampras says
the learning finds lessing
in the 1992 U.S. Open final
Nobody cases with the
runner-tip b.:
Epterlief M. Paul Cair.

Q READERS' UIZ

QUESTIONS

What were the two conditions that Gary Sobers insisted on if he was to act for the movie Two Gentlemen's Sherry?

2. In which sport did Jemima Goldsmith represent her country?



Answer to Question No.9

3. In archery what is a 'petticoat'?

Which famous NBA
player was
nicknamed 'Madonna's
Toy Boy'?

What is a 'hospital pass' in soccer?



Answer to Question No.18

If Imran Khan
founded the
Shaukat Khanum
Memorial Hospital, then
who is the founder of the
Islamic People Hospital
Trust?

With which sport . would you use the terms 'Open Gate' and Close Gate'?

Which international cricketer is nicknamed Chicken George'?

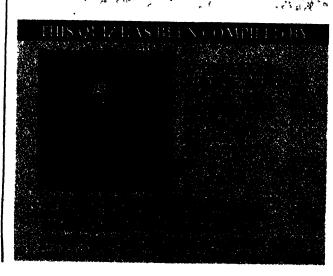
Which international cricketer is nicknamed 'The Squirrel'?

10. Which star footballer is nicknamed 'Dennis the Menace'?

If Carl Lewis represented the Santa Monica club, which (in)famous athlete represented the Mazda Optimistic Sports Club?

ANSWERS

- 1. The two conditions were; a) There would be no make-up and b) the bowlers would have to be real.
- 2. Show Jumping.
- 2. That part of the target face which is outside the largest ring and has no scoring value.
- 4. Dennis Rodman.
- 8. It refers to a pass so badly timed or so badly judged that the recipient is likely to be injured as he gets the ball.
- 6. Jehangir Khan.
- 7. Skiing.
- 8. Eddo Brandes
- 9. Nathan Asile.
- 10. Paul Gascolene.
- . 11. Ben Johnson.







SACHIN TENDULKAR SUMS IT UP ALL

Sachin Tendulkar at the MRF Pavilion at the Auto Expo '98 on 21st January 1998.

Here is what he wrote in the visitors' book at the MRF Pavilion...

It was a superb experience being at this M.R.F. Stall I had never seen anything like this before of I am glad I got an apportunity to do it this time.

wishes,



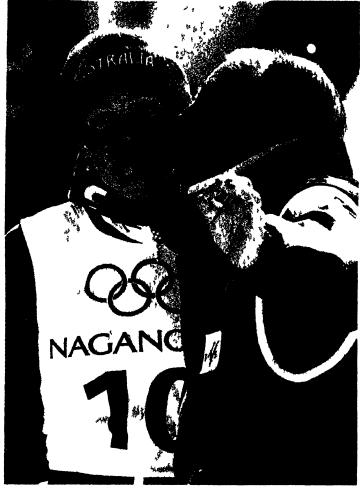
Sach hai,... Sachin!

Now you can visit the MRF Website at www.mrftyres.com

Instac Mrf Anh 2410









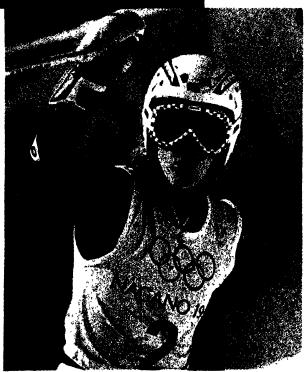
Above left: A South Korean team member (second from right) in the 3000m short track relay wipes a tear after the team received their gold medals. Austria's CHRISTIAN MAYER (middle) hits a gate in the second run of the men's giant slalom at Mt. Higashidate. Mayer was second after the first run but at the end of the event he figured nowhere. The winners of the same event (above) celebrate their victories. From left: Austrians STEFAN EBERHARTER (silver), HERMANN MAIER (gold) and Swiss MICHAEL VON GRUENIGEN (bronze).



Right: Alpine skating superstar ALBERTO TOMBA of Italy watches from the finish area after crashing out of the men's giant slalom. Tomba, gold medallist of the event at the 1988 and 1992 Winter Olympics caught a ski on a gate at the top of the course and crashed (inset) into the safety netting. This was his last Games. Germany's HILDE GREG (below) after winning the women's slalom gold medal. She won with a timing of 1:32.40.

American ERIC BERGOUST (below right) listens to the Star Spangled Banner during the medals ceremony after he received the gold for the men's freestyle skiing aerials

i 🖫







BJORN DAEHLIE (30) became the Norwegian king of cross country, winning a record eight gold medals. He also equalled an Olympic record of a sixth gold medal by clinching the 10km classical style and became the greatest Winter Games star. TAKEFURI NISHITANI (right) who won the gold in the 500m short track and HOTOSHI UEMATSU of Japan show their medals









Thank You NAGAN(

Clockwise from above:

Top: Emperor AKIHITO and Empress MICHIKO watch the closing ceremony of the XVIII Winter Games where 24-00 athletes from 72 nations participated. Members of the US team (right) carry a Thank You Nagano' banner. The next Games will be held in Salt Lake City (USA) in 2002. Russia's SERGEI NEMCHINOV (centre) falls on Czech goalie DOMNIK HASEK (left) as ROMAN HAMILIK looks on during the men's hockey final (below right) at the Big Hat. The Czechs won the gold. The participants carrying their respective national flags during the closing ceremony



RACING MOMENTS

The All India Motor Race Meet at Chennai provided some good racing and excitement for the spectators. However, much remains to be done for the improvement of motor sport in India

FROM GEORGE FRANCIS CHENNAI

T was a fairly decent crowd that greeted the organisers and the competitors of the 41st All India Motor Race Meet that was held in the first weekend of February at the MMSC tracks at Chennai

Two 5 lap races for Group C (modified) and Group D (unmodified) bikes up to 110cc three 5 lap races for Group A 125 and 250cc bikes and 2 races for the

TVS Race A Bike-Championship plus 2 races for Group N (unmodified) Fstcem and 3 for the Elf Formula Campus Cars and a single race for McDowell 1000 cars driven by CEO S (who incidentally are veter in racers) marked the two day calendar for the 41st All India Motor Race Mect Thanks to Vicky Chandok whose hype on the races made it at least mentally exciting for the spectators

The bike racers lifted the spirits of the spectators with Irlan Sheriff Rajkumar and some Sri Lankan riders performing wheelic after wheelie on the Dunlop bridge before the McDowell corner which runs into the straight But it was Narain

Spectators were thrilled by the wheelies done by the mobike riders. Here, M R Rajkumar does one on his way to win the Group A 125 cc 5 lap race

Karthike yan who drew thunderous applause from the audience for his impeccable driving in the Formula Campus cars. As many as 16 Campus cars participated and eight had Indians in their cockpits, and the rest comprised of Frenchmen and a French lady Melina Priam who was the only female participant.

The Formula Campus which is a very basic formula car was introduced in the Asian circuit by Mr Yoong of Malaysia who once promoted the Formula Asia series. This was done to run a 'Junior Championship' so that youngsters could be trained to later take up the Formula Asia series which is a formula car built on the lines of a Formula Vauxhall and Formula Lotus. This would further help the champion of every year to get into the



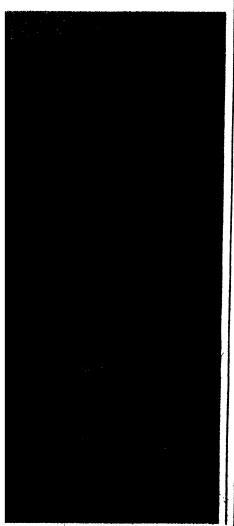
Right

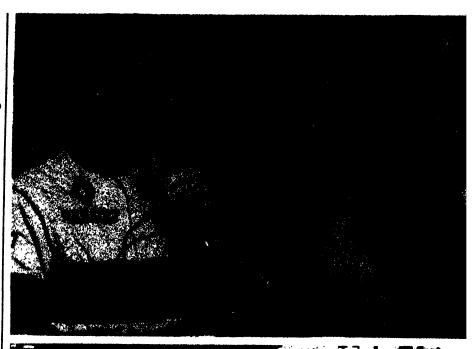
If you thought glamour existed only eround the F1 paddocks we present some evidence from conservative Chennai. That's Guillaume Gruet of France who won the Formula Campus category being interviewed

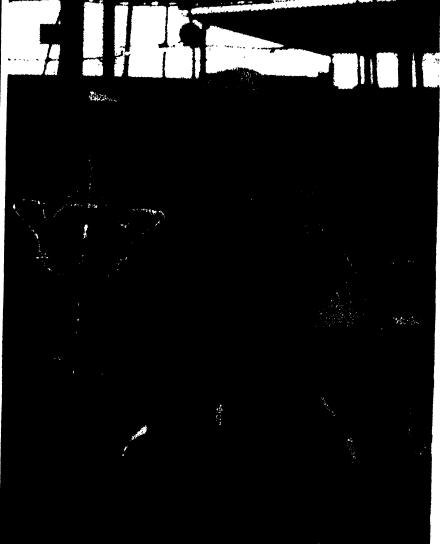
Narain Karthikeyan is India's best hope of becoming a Formula One driver and he plans to be there by 2000

next higher level of motor racing ultimately producing more and more racing talent from Asia for the Formula 1 series, which remains the ultimate in motor racing.

Yoong ran into problems within five years and the company was squashed. With no one around to take up from where Yoong left it, Elf picked up about 20 cars to promote their product, and tried selling fleets of these cars to interested individuals. It was through them that these Campus cars were brought to India. MMSC









The big shots: five industrialists participated in the CEO's race. Geutam Singhania (second from right) finished first, while Vijay Mallya (third from right) finished runners-up and Ajit Thomas (extreme right) finished third

gave one the impression that it was a major catch for the 41st AIMRM.

All said and done, there was no complaint on the speeds these machines could achieve and the 3 races they ran was definitely a spectators, delight. Guillame Greut of France and Narain Karthikeyan, the 1996 Formula Asia Champion were the contenders to the throne. Gruet went on to win the Formula Campus title while India's chief hope had to remain content with a runner-up spot in one of the Campus car races. Technical problems and fatigue saw Karthikeyan relinquish his quest.

The 22-year Coimbatore lad, Narain (son of the rallying legend and cotton merchant Karthikeyan) has proved that the efforts taken by his 'perfectionist' father to send him to racing schools in the UK, while young has proved useful. Narain is the

first Indian to win any Asian level motor racing Championship, the Formula Asia Championship in 1996. Narain had one more first to his credit last year. He finished on top in the Formula Vauxhall races at Donnington in the UK. He finished eighth in the overall championship standings.

A hard worker by temperament, Narain is a very shy and private person. Today, his eyes are set on the Formula 3 British Championships. This could be a step further towards the ultimate goal of becoming a Formula 1 driver. "I feel it is the next step towards my dream of becoming a Formula One driver. Consistency in performance in the F-3 class should make me work towards a Formula 1 driver status by 2000. Hard work and determination has no substitute and I will work towards that," said Narain.

Narain who has a Rs two crores budget per year for his racing now, has luckily, found some sponsors. The UB Group (Kingfisher) (Rs. 65 lakhs), JK Tyres (Rs. 25 lakhs) and Vijayashree Textiles, Coimbatore (Rs. 13 lakhs) are the current sponsors of Narain. Opel and Mobil will supply him the engines which are valued at about Rs 65 lakhs.

When Karthikeyan was not providing the excitement, the 'Cheering Brigade' brought in by McDowell kept the crowds awake and excited. The CEO's race was the other event, that brought in glamour to the event. Though there were only five CEO's, Gautam Singhania (Raymonds), Vijay Mallya (McDowell), and Ajit Thomas (AVT) finished in that order. It was a race to be won by Mallya who led for three of the five laps before conceding his position to Singhania after losing the power of his engine.

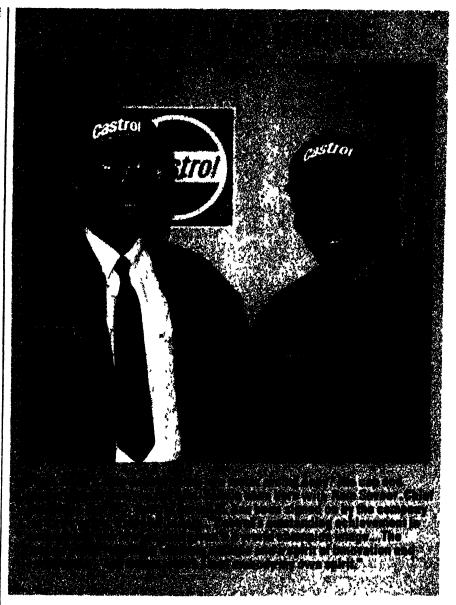
Though the Madras Motor Sports Club (MMSC)did put up a much better show than in the last few years, the fact that MMSC is progressing (if so) was not evident anywhere. The organisers of the 41st Annual event

have failed miserably in making use of the new track brought up at Irungattukotta, about 40 kms. from downtown Chennai. The 3.7 kms. track, which has 10 major curves, is considered a challenge to the driving/riding skills of the competitors than for the sheer power of racing. Sanctioned to ride all makes and types of motor cycles, Formula III is the limit for the drivers. Conforming to FIA (Federation Internationale du Motorcycliste) standards, the trustees of this potential money-making proposition owe Indian Bank crores of rupees only as interest. Said one of the old-time organisers, "When we bought the track, the various chunks of land forming the rectangular plot, other than the track itself, was bought up between the Trustees, who promised to build rest houses, resorts and restaurants." Today, the spectator who travels 40kms to see a race, has to cough up hundred rupees for a sub-standard lunch. A cold drink costs Rs.15/- and above and an ice candy is also priced similarly.

This is one of the major deterrents for spectator support to motor sports in India. Ideally, they should keep the gates free and arrange some recreation areas for spectators to celebrate their weekends with their families. Unlike our track record, similar versions of motor sports abroad offer so much recreation, that a 'facing Sunday' (the Sunday after the race) is a fun-filled holiday at the circuit.

The MMSC, on the other hand, have taken no steps so far to pull in the crowds. Come February every year, and all the minus points are swept under the carpet, under the pretext of the All India Motor Race Meet. There is no news of the track later, except when the MMSC decides to use the track as a 'special stage' for the South India Rally. Otherwise the only time the track comes alive to racers, officials and the watchmen, who total 100 including this lone pressperson, is during the All India Road Racing Championship.

Ultimately who is the loser? The MMSC, the Federation of Motor



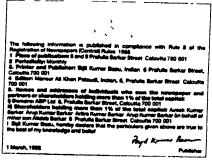
Sports Clubs of India, the Press, or the competitors? The answer is obvious. Years back there was a suggestion to run a Racing School. With veterans galore in Chennai, and racing legend Kari's single seater Marutis available, how much would it take to go around to the colleges and schools to scout for talent?

What it takes is some kind of a commitment to promote the sport, educate the public on motor sports and find new and exciting drivers. With so much of corporate sponsorship now available, even funds should not be a major problem. Further, the old guard at the helm has to move out and make way for the

younger generation who can bring in their brand of dynamic management.

If MMSC does not wake up fast, one shouldn't be surprised if one day the morning papers carry a brief "Indian Bank takes over the MMSC tracks"

PHOTOGRAPHS SCORP NEWS



"I HAVE CARVED NAME IN CHES

Says former World Championship challenger NIGEL SHORT in a wide-ranging interview

MARINE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTY OF THE P

AFTER Bobby Fischer, Nigel Short was the only non-Russian to be a challenger for the World Championship crown. The enigma that he is, Short is known more for his charisma, than his chess prowess. He has also been quite controversial.

He was in Calcutta recently to take part in the Goodricke International Open Chess Tournament

Here are excerpts from the interview:

How do you rate your chess career?

Since the Second World War, only two non-Russians have challenged the reigning world champion. One was Bobby Fischer and the other was myself. (Of course, now we have your Vishwanathan Anand also.) I guess I have carved my name in chess history. But, of late, my performance has not been up to the mark. But I can play better chess if I want to. You need the correct motivation. In world championship matches, for example, you have to give your hundred per cent, because you know these games would be remembered. In open tournaments, you win a lot of money but you don't make history.

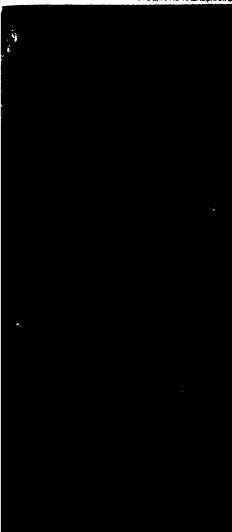
According to players like grandmaster Saba Horvath of Hungary, the Kasparov-Deep Thought match was a hoax. Supposedly, Kasparov was paid a lot of money to lose. What do you

think? Also, do you believe that computers would pose a threat to the human world champions in future?

Please believe me, but the outcome of the match was NOT decided beforehand. I know Garry. For Garry, money is a symbol of power, a necessity. But definitely, money is not his prime motivation. He would surely not accept money to lose a match.

As for having a computer as a world champion, I don't think there is a realistic chance of having a software reigning supremean chess but, of course, we can speculate.

Do you think that now that the PCA has ceased to exist, FIDE would accommodate Kasparov?



In less than five years, I can see
Kasparov playing in the FIDE circuit.
In fact, this year itself, we might see
Kasparov staging a comeback. He will
be playing against Vladimir Kramnik
or Vishwanathan Anand. But Karpov
is a smart cookie. He is really bright.
Speaking to FIDE delegates in London
earlier this year, I found that there was
some uneasiness with the new
format, which gave all the advantage
to Karpov. From the next world
championship cycle, if Kasparov
plays, the whole system will have to
be modified.

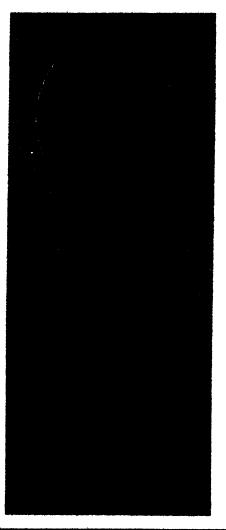
How do you see yourself five years from now?

Five years from now, I don't think I'd be challenging Garry Kasparov for the World Championship crown, although I won't be surprised if that happens. Mathew Sadler, at present, is the highest-rated player in England. Against him, I don't think I'd lose.

My rating was taken away after I had formed the Professional Chess Association, breaking away from FIDE. My current aim therefore is to just get back to the top ten list. I've been among the top ten players of the world for about ten years now.

When I reach 45, maybe I'd be a chess coach, preparing lectures for the National Olympiad team or coaching the juniors. Write books. Live a life of indolence.

You are originally from Leigh, Lancashire. Have you settled in Greece because the chess environment is better there? No. My wife, Rhea, is a Greek. Actually if you intend to earn your



bread from chess the important thing is to stay somewhere in Europe. In fact I would say that it is an absolute must that you stay in Europe.

Take Anand's example. He is now a citizen of Spain. That way he saves a lot of money on airfare. The Spanish climate, chess or otherwise, is just perfect for the Indian maestro. I prefer Greece.

You have become controversial, after the PCA episode when you decided to break away, along with Kasparov, from the world chess body FIDE. How do you see yourself as a person?

You know, as a teenager I used to play the bass guitar and belonged to a rock band. In fact I remember giving my first live performance on TV when I was fifteen. But as we grew up, my friends dispersed, and the rock band dissolved. At seventeen I quit school and decided to take up chess seriously. But I loved economics and commerce. I guess I would have been a stock exchange broker had I not been a chess player, and done pretty well for myself as a broker. So you see I am an ordinary human.

But I won't say I am perfect. In fact I have had my shares of trials and errors. I made my greatest mistake in 1973. Don't ask me what.

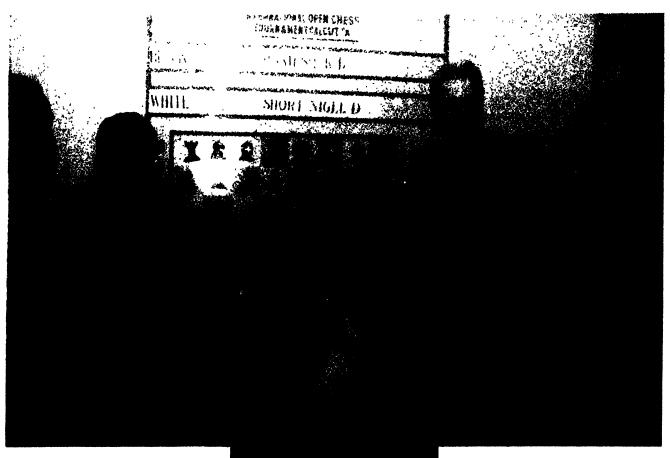
Tell us something about your hobbies—music and politics.

Well, I simply love the blues. My favourite artist is 'New Young'. 'New Young' somehow reminds me of myself as a chess player. When he is good, he is really good, but when he is bad, he is awful. Currently, I've been too pre-occupied with other things to listen to much music, but I watch a lot of MTV. I don't like the 'Spice Girls'.

I am a staunch conservative. In fact I had contemplated getting into active politics at one point of time. But you know, I don't want my private life to be dissected in public.

Kavalek, who had helped Fischer during his matches against Spassky, was your second for quite some time. Why did you

INTERVIEW



leave him? Who is your current second?

I don't have a second at present. You need to have a perfect frequency with your seconds to really benefit. With Kavalek, we had our differences. It reached a point where it hampered my work. Kavalek was too greedy for money, so I had to sack him.

Now I prepare alone. Of course having a laptop with the latest data base helps.

Would you advise the youngsters of today to quit studies like you did, and take up chess as a profession?

When I dropped out from school at 17, it definitely helped my chess career. But as a rule of thumb, I would say, don't take up chess as a profession if you are not a grandmaster or somewhere near the grandmaster title, by the age of twenty.

There is money to be made in chess. And glamour. But it is extremely hard work. Moreover you have to invest a lump sum initially. For example, you need to have a laptop computer and the latest data base. You have to settle

Short before the start of the Goodricke

International Chess tournament

somewhere in Europe. You need to be coached professionally. All this involves a lot of money.

I've been somewhat disillusioned by the professional chess world. In fact I won't let my six-year-old daughter Kyveli take up chess seriously when she grows up.

What is your assessment of the Indian chess scenario?

The Goodricke tournament is very good. In fact it was stronger than what I had anticipated. I would say the Indian players play far better than what their FIDE ratings are. I had played Neelotpal Das. He seems to know a lot of chess theory, but he still has a long way to go. Sashikiran, Dinesh Sharma and Surya Sekhar Ganguli are very good. But I don't think they are exceptionally talented

or have the potential to be the future world champion. But you can never tell

There were some players who had lost their motivation to perform and a sort of complacency had set in. The spectators were a mixed crowd. Some enjoyed the games. Some enjoyed the players. There were some people who knew very little chess, but were mesmerised with the glamour of the game.

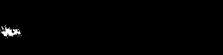
What is your next destination? Would you like to coach some of our youngsters, like the names you have just mentioned? I am heading for Spain, to play a couple of tournaments there.

As for coaching in India, yes I would definitely love that. I would love to play exhibition matches or give lectures. But I am a professional, and I need a sponsor for these activities.

But I have fallen in love with the City of Joy, and would surely come back if the organisers invite me next year.











freewheeling

Na whim, while on vacation, I went with my cousin to see a National League football match between F. C. Kochin and Mohun Bagan at the Kochi International stadium. Forty-five minutes before the match starts, there are long queues before the stadium gates. In the large car park in front, there are several dozen cars, jeeps, vans and an occasional mini bus

"They are all out-of-towners, coming from places like Trichur and Calicut," my cousin observes.

Inside, the stadium looks attractive with its alternating orange, blue, yellow and red plastic seats in different sections and the four floodlight structures towering above the field. Half the stadium is already full. This is a Thursday evening, a week day, but the crowd is already quite impressive. There is an air of expectation. The players of both the teams are limbering up on the field.

A drum beat starts up on the terraces. People are hoping that F. C. Kochin would put it across Bagan in their home town. For so long, Calcutta has been the headquarters of Indian football. Now, by overhearing snatches of conversation among the spectators, it is clear that the Keralites think that Bengal's aura of invincibility is over.

"I remember seeing Subhash
Bhowmick and Gautam Sarkar in the
Seventies. They were too good.
Bengal doesn't produce players like
that any more," a man remarks. /

"But Bhaichung is excellent," another man says.

"Most of the players in Bengal football are foreign imports. It's preventing the local talent from coming up," a man opines...

The game, in unpunctual India, starts at precisely 6 p.m. From the word go, it is F.C.Kochin's match. They launch raid after raid on the Mohun Bagan goal. Shots by I.M.Vijayan, Carlton Chapman and Raman Vijayan go over the bar, by the side of the posts, straight into former Indian captain Hemanta Dora's very capable hands.

"Poor finishing, poor finishing," people keep remarking. The spectators moan and groan in disappointment.

The quality of the football is so visually unattractive. The moves by both the teams are disjointed; there is no smooth build up of attack. It all seems to be done so haphazardly. The contrast with the smooth moves in international football that we see almost daily on 'ESPN' and 'Star Sports' is just too much. I tell my cousin this.

He gives a bright smile and says, "Be optimistic. Within 100 years, we should reach an international standard."

The match continues. Bagan is in a comatose state. The only man who is awake is chach Chathunni, on the sidelines, wearing a blue track pant and a pink T-shirt. He is jumping up and down and gesticulating and

shouting like crazy at his players. The referee, Inayatullah Khan, blows a whistle in warning to him. Chathunni joins his palms together in a silent apology.

Break time. No goals.

My cousin tells me of the time in Dubai when he went to see a local football contest with an Arab Sheikh. The latter was going to see a match after many years of watching the game on TV.

When a goal was scored, he turned to my cousin and said, "Where is the replay?"

"In your head," was what my cousin wanted to tell the Sheikh but didn't.

"Is he dumb?" I ask.

"Not when you looked at his wallet," my cousin replies immediately.

The match resumes. Somehow, F.C. Kochin have lost their spirit and rhythm. They have missed far too many opportunities in the first half. It has sapped their enthusiasm. Bagan senses it. They launch the occasional counter-attack. They are allowed open spaces on the field.

Suddenly, a free kick is awarded, a few yards outside the box. Chima Okerie—barrel-chested, with tree trunk legs—strikes a pile driver that hits the inner part of the bar and goes in, (1-0). The spectators are stunned into silence by this goal, scored against the run of play. Despite all the talk about the centre of football moving from Bengal to Kerala, the former is still putting it across the home team.

With twenty-five minutes left for the match to finish, the crowd begins to walk out in droves. How quickly we give up, I thought. A country like Germany would think twenty-five minutes more of a match is like a lifetime. But not Indians, nor the F. C. Kochin players. The whole stadium has given up. It comes as no surprise when the end result is one nil for Bagan.

Outside, in the car park, my cousin discovers, to his utter chagrin, what seems to epitomise the state of Indian football: a flat tyre.

Shevlin Sebastian



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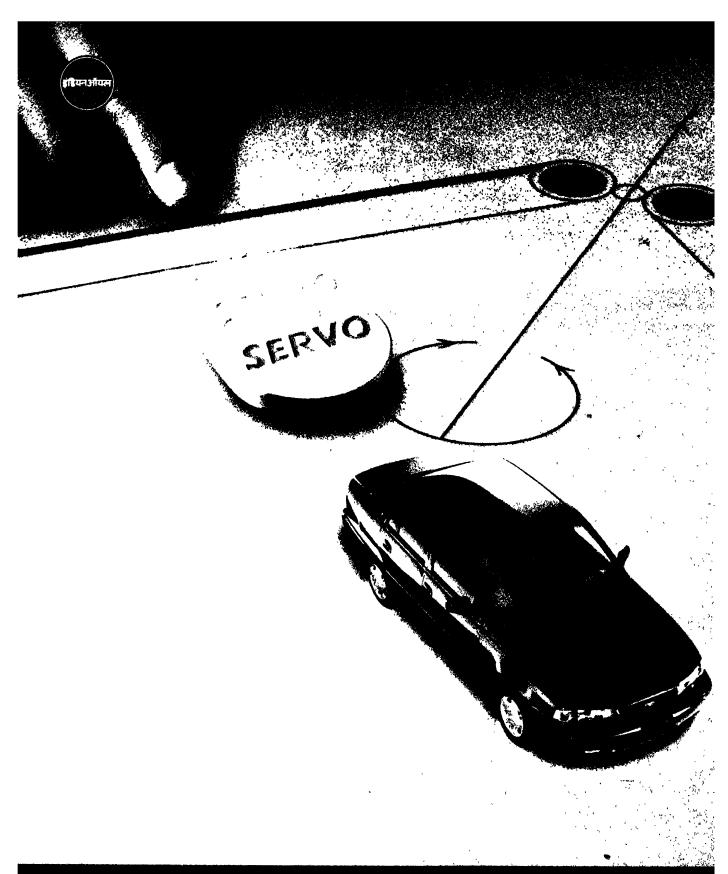
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SHOOTING STAR

Despite the oppressive heat and humidity, huge crowds of all ages queued up to have a glimpse of Boris Becker

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THE MOST PASSIONATE GAME ON EARTH

Nothing can match the World Cup of football in terms of spectator interest and quality play

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THE GHETTO CINDERELLA

Venus Williams, despite a difficult impoverished black background, is the new star in women's tennis







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FREEWHEELING

Editor: Mansur Alı Khan Pataudı

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF SACHIN TENDULKAR BY UTPAL SORKAR

THE NEW DON

SACHIN TENDULKAR ushers in a new era in international cricket

BY SUMIT MUKHERJEE

WILL be going to bed having nightmares of Sachin just running down the wicket and belting me back over the head for six"

That is what Shane Warne, the world's most successful spinner, had to say after returning home from an Indian odyssey which has also left most of his mates in a state of shock.

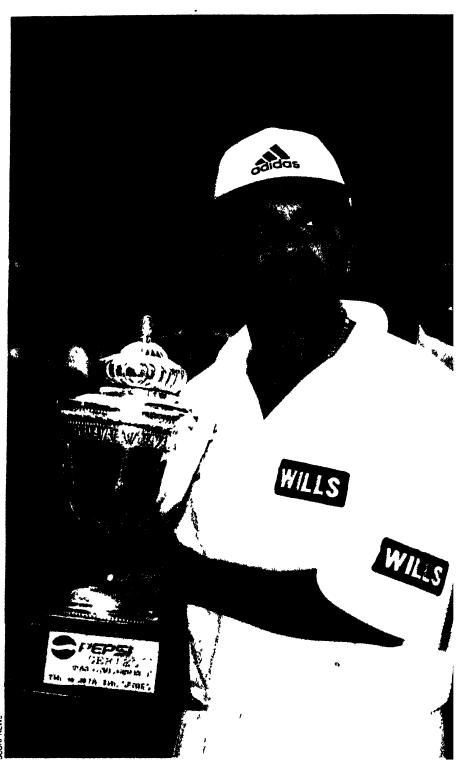
Never before in the post-Bradman era has one man so overwhelmingly dominated a rival attack as Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar has done in recent times versus the Aussies. Over the past two-and-a-half months, Shane Warne and Co. have had no respite from his punitive blade, which has fetched him more than 1,000 runs—all forms of the game included.

The Aussies will indeed need some time to recover from the battering at the hands of the dimunitive Indian who is being hailed as 'The New Don.

It is not easy to step into the shoes of the legendary Sir Donald Bradman whose exploits on a pitch are now part of cricketing folklore. But such has been Tendulkar's form with the bat that cricket writers as well as experts, having run out of adjectives, are left with no choice but measure him against the living legend, who has perhaps been the ultimate in the art of batting

When Brian Lara scripted those world records—375 in Tests and 501 in a first-class game—just about everybody labelled him the 'left-handed Bradman. But the West Indian's subsequent inconsistency as well as his ego problem with the West Indies Board has diluted the adage somewhat.

Sachin Tendulker with the Men of the Series trophy which he received at after Bangalore Test



Lara, who had lett Tendulkar a few laps behind in the race for the best batsman in the world title after those heady days, has slipped quite a bit. And Tendulkar, despite a very disappointing year in the hot seat, has come back with a vengeance. The cricket pitch is no longer a happy place for bowlers, especially if Sachin happens to be taking guard at the other end. The Lara-Tendulkar rivalry may continue, but for the moment there are no prizes for guessing who is the king. And the single-minded approach of Sachin only suggests that he may be holding court for long.

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In a way, Warne's tribute to Tendulkar—from one all-time great to another—sums up the psychological state of the Australians

The kind of support Sachin has been giving to the Indian line-up despite being unseated, can only be an eye-opener to others, especially those who tend to put personal interests before national pride

who have suffered the most at Tendulkar's hands. Every time the Aussie thinktank thought up a method to curb Tendulkar's madness, the little master's innovative bent of mind helped him remain one step ahead.

But are all these comparisons to Sir Don mere media-hype which will burst with his next failure? Well, labels and comparisons only have a limited appeal. In the ultimate analysis, a player is always remembered for what he was and not for what he could have been.

The biggest compliment for Sachin has obviously come from Sir Don himself. In a rare interview, a couple of years back, Sir Don, talking about the



Indian prodigy had said "He reminds me of myself" Coming from the legend himself, it means much

But, in what way is Sachin similar to the Don? Those who have had the privilege of having watched both in action, say, the similarity lies in the fact that both love to dominate the bowling

If batting was all about keeping the bad ball out, Geoff Boycott would

have beaten others hands down. Viv Richards has been the most intimidating of batsmen in contemporary cricket. His undiluted aggression often bordered on arrogance, but he too could not be bracketed with the Don. For, batting is an art, which requires some finesse—a touch of aesthetics.

Australia's one-day captain Steve Waugh has said that he has not seen a

more sweeter timer of the ball than Sachin. Apart from his unbridled aggression, it is his timing which compares favourably with Sir Don's style. And, of course, Sachin's sharp cricketing brain is one of the qualities which goes

into the making of a legend.

Technically, Sachin is far from perfect. Lara, in fact, has a tighter defence and better temperament to play a longer innings. But the West Indies captain lacks the flair which sets Sachin apart in a crowd

The problem with Sachin is that he is often his own enemy. When he is, charged up, he tends to get a bit carried away and ends up gifting his wicket to the hapless bowler. Also, he tends to play across the line.

The important thing is he has escred hisavily. Against every attack both at home and oversees. That is new he has always played the game and that is what makes him so special

However, whatever may be his technical flaws, the fact is Tendulkar had gone from strength to strength in international cricket since making his debut as a wide-eyed 16-year-old on the acid tour of Pakistan in 1989.

The important thing is he has scored heavily. Against every attack both at home and overseas. That is how he has always played the game and that is what makes him so special—a rare jewel in the game.

For Indian cricket, wallowing in mediocrity, Tendulkar is God's gift. It is not easy for a 25-year-old, to live up to the expectations of 90 crore Indians every time he walks out to bat. Yet, more often than not, he has given millions of his countrymen something to cheer about as he did in Sharjah the other night.





Autor while was un for grade at the desert vertie.

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Azharuddin receives the Coca Cola trophy after winning the Sharjah cricket final against Australia, thanks to Sachin's superlative performance

The Sharjah triumph was, in fact, a personal victory for Sachin who batted like a man possessed in the last two games. Those who saw him bat in the final league game would testify that it was perhaps one of the best one day innings ever played.

The sort of innings Sachin played when India needed to qualify for the final, was as rare as the desert storm which lashed the stadium in course of that knock. The mild sand storm may have taken everyone by surprise—it even amused the Aussies. But what happened in the aftermath left the Aussies devastated as Sachin went on





GOPAL SARKAR

the rampage

The effortless ease with which he clobbered the bowlers to all parts of the ground and beyond meant the master blaster was going for the bigger target—victory But for a stupid piece

of umpiring—the shoulder-high delivery should have been called a no-ball—Sachin would have gifted India an improbable win

Well, he did Two days later Same venue, same opposition, against all

odds Each and every WorldTel commentator had opined that Australia were the favourites. Only Sachin thought otherwise. When the whole team should have chipped in to gift him a victory on his 25th birthday,



Azher drives the Opel Astra which Sachin Tendulkar won for being the Man Of The Series

single-handedly won the Cup for India.

There was the odd eye-catching performance from the youngsters. Ajit Agarkar was indeed impressive versus New Zealand in the first game where Sourav Ganguly hit a brilliant century, but, by and large, the Indian team continues to be over-dependent on the Mumbai ka babu who, is also fast turning into a very capable leg-spinner

For those who attribute the change in captaincy to a change in India's cricketing fortunes could not be more

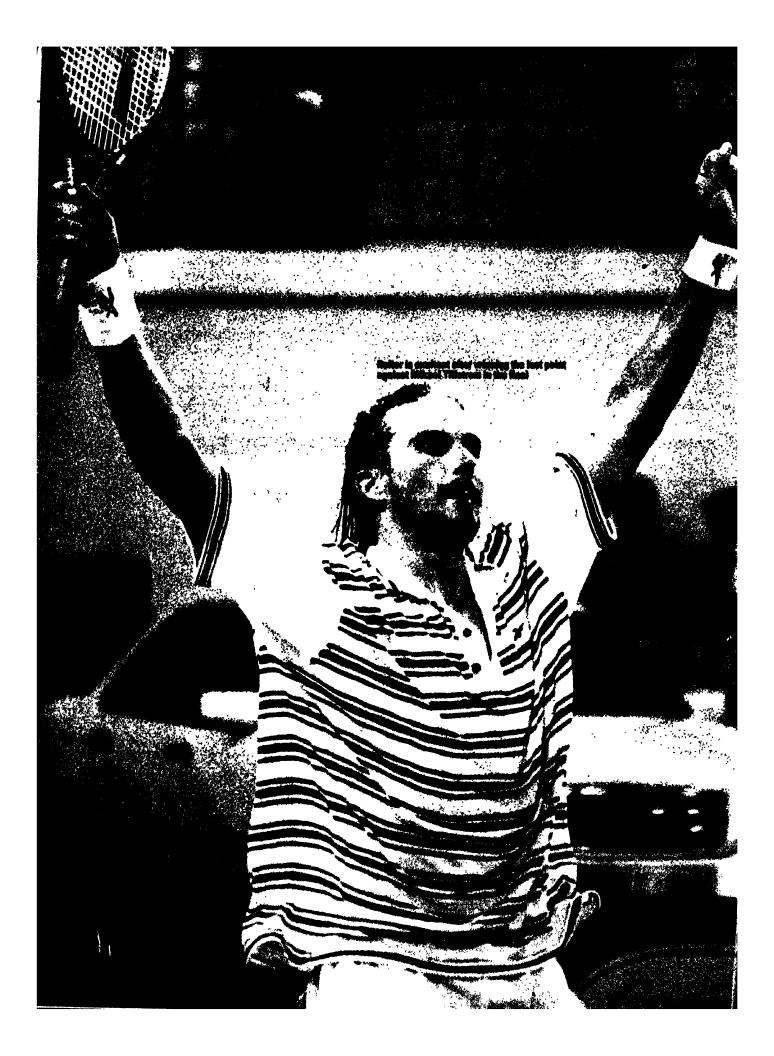


GOPAL SARKAR

Sachin took it upon himself to gift one to his country—and to his wife—hitting his second successive century in the process before being done in by another atrocious piece of umpiring which was perhaps the

worst part of the Coca-Cola Cup.

For those who were convinced that team effort was the key to India's successes versus Australia at home, were quickly stuffing those words in their mouths as Sachin wrong. The kind of support Sachin has been giving to this Indian line-up despite being unseated, can only be an eye-opener to others, especially those who tend to put personal interests before national pride.





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HARD BUT FAIR

That's how PATRICK RAFTER plays his game. He lifted the Gold Flake Open crown in style at Chennai

BY AMITAVA DASGUPTA, CHENNAI

seed played second fiddle in an ATP Tour event like Patrick Rafter did at the Gold Flake Open last month. The 25-year-old Aussie, ranked No. 4 in the world, was relegated to the status

any concern to them that the long-haired Rafter had, only recently, won his maiden Grand Slam crewn in style. They simply refused to recognise anyone but 'darling Boris'.

The true connoisseurs may have felt slightly awkward seeing an upwardly mobile star thus neglected, but it suited Rafter fine. A man of simple tastes and plain living, Rafter had been finding life in the fast lane a trifle



Tillstrom had his admirers too at Chennai

of a part-time actor as Boris Becker took centrestage in Chennai.

It didn't matter to tennis lovers that the handsome Aussie was ranked 60 slots higher on the ATP computer than the ageing veteran he was 'competing' with. Neither was it of PHOTOGRAPHS GEORGE FRANCIS/SCORP NEWS suffocating ever since his conquest of Flushing Meadow last September. Not one to say 'no' easily, he discovered that too much demands were being made on his time from too many unwanted quarters.

Losing out in the popularity stakes,

EANDER PAES never had it so good in his eight-year-old tennis career. When just about everyone found the fluid-draining humidity of Chennai a major hindrance, the home-bred hero churned out one victory after another to clinch the doubles crown (with Mahesh Bhupathi) and land a semi-final berth in the singles.

He had been to the singles semis of a Tour event three times before and he has also won eight doubles titles already. But this was the first time he had achieved such a double' at the same event. No wonder Leander termed the 1998 Gold Flake Open as a high point in his career. Only he could do nothing to wipe off the coat of controversy linked with the Gold Flake Open success vis-a-vis his Davis Cup withdrawal.

Ten days before the World Group first-round tie versus Italy, Leander informed the All India Tennis Association (AITA) from his Orlando base that a suspected rotator cuff tear on the right shoulder would prevent him from playing in Genoa. An MRI scan revealed that the tear had been avoided, but specialists advised him to be off tennis for four weeks, especially because Leander had problems with the elbow and the wrist as well.

The AITA and the Indian team management, dependent as they are on this one man to produce magical performances and bring in the moolah, refused to take his injury seriously and kept on waiting for him. So typically amateurish was the officials' handling of the situation that India were left stranded with an embarrassing—and unique—three-man team for the battle with Italy.

They even had the cheek to put the blame indirectly on Leander. As he rightly said, by forcing

A COAT OF CONTROVERSY

Rumours abounded when Leander Paes missed the Davis Cup tie against Italy due to injury but was fit enough to take part in the Gold Flake Open a week later



him to go to Genoa, Leander would have been cheating himself and the team. After all, if he played three five-set matches on the slow claycourt in Genoa and tore his rotator cuff, he could have been out of the game for a long, long time.

The sympathy was all on Leander's side, till he went ahead

with his Gold Flake Open commitment and had a memorable week—beginning the day after India completed its Davis Cup defeat. He played all week with his arm under a heavy strap, and never went full blast while serving. That apart, there was no hint of discomfort as he came out of several testing situations with flying colours. Quite expectedly, the question cropped up at every post-match media conference: Do you rue the decision to skip the Davis Cup tie?

"I disobeyed the doctor's advice by playing after a two-week break instead of taking four weeks off. The gamble has paid off, so everyone's talking. I'm clear in my conscience that I took the right decision. I didn't have the time to prepare for and play the Italy.tie," Leander insisted, "I want to be known as the best Indian Davis Cupper, so why would I hurt my chances by not playing deliberately?"

That aspersions are being cast on his commitment to the country have angered Indian tennis' Hero No 1. His body language suggested he was a trifle shaken too, perhaps not expecting these allegations.

The fact is, Leander would have been less than 50 per cent fit for the Davis Cup tie. The physiotherapy sessions and specialists' attention he had in Orlando definitely resurrected him to a great extent, but he would have played the Gold Flake Open anyway. Not only for the substantial financial commitment with the sponsors, but also to pick up some points which would help him gain direct entry into the French Open.

He may not be saying it in as many words, but it's clear that time is running out for Leander to make a mark in the singles. To rectify the yawning gap that has opened up in his singles and doubles ranking, he has to concentrate on his singles

career this year and the next.

"My priority for this year will be to push up my singles ranking....I believe I should be in the top-75 soon," he remarked in Chennai. To achieve that kind of a goal, without hurting his 'bread-and-butter' doubles results, Leander has to take 'controversial' decisions like the one last month. For eight years, he has given his blood and sweat for the country's cause. There may be more to come from him in the Davis Cup, although it might be no longer at the expense of his career.

While discussing the ridiculous manner in which the AITA functions, Leander made a point which is significant in the context of the current controversy. "Since the match against Sweden in Calcutta two years back, I've had injuries in every Davis Cup tie we have been involved in. Yet, the AITA doesn't consider it important enough to send a doctor with the team for away ties," he complained. "Some may think I'm saying this because my father is the team doctor for home matches. But that's not the case, believe me. He's been of immense help not only to me but to others also. In ' this age of stress and strain, a doctor is a must."

For the record, the AITA has been sending a masseur with the Davis Cup team abroad, but not a doctor. Amazing, but hardly a surprise from an association which does not even send a replacement for a player who pulls out 10 days before the event.

Well, Leander's solid reputation may have taken a slight beating which he can easily compensate for in the years to come. More importantly, India's biggest tennis star has sent out a strong message for those who run the sport in this country—don't take the players for granted; give them the support they need if you expect them to serve the country efficiently.

Amitava DasGupta

thus, came as a welcome change and he quite relished this 'new' situation. "I'm fine with whatever attention I'm getting here. No complaints, believe me," he said after winning his first match at Chennai.

His problem was of an entirely different nature. Coming off a miserable Davis Cup weekend during which he had to pull out of the reverse singles because of a nagging virus, Rafter wasn't sure what to expect in the Gold Flake Open. Basically, he didn't know whether he was fit enough to last the full week in terribly hot and humid conditions.

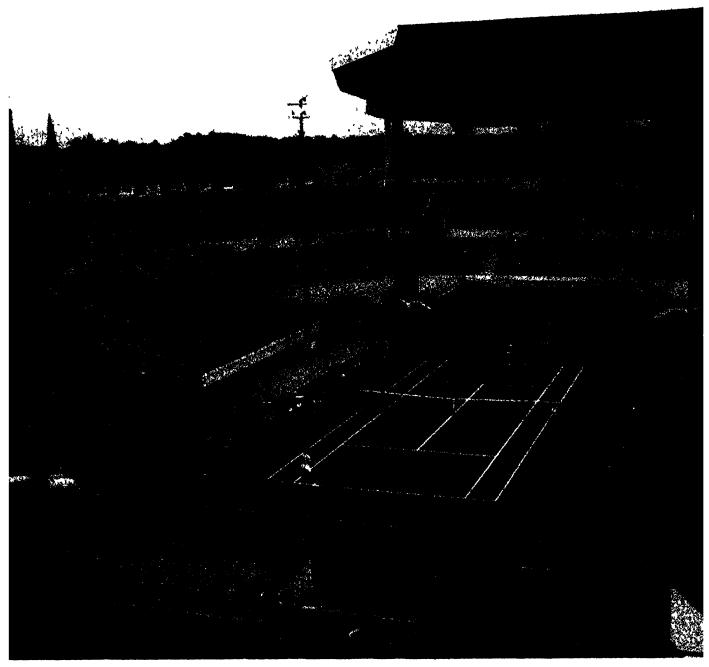
What he longed for in the early rounds was a couple of tough matches to help him smoothen the rusty edges. He didn't get that, as Orlin Stanoytchev and Ivo Heuberger managed a total of nine games in four



The familiar Indian flag but this time, it's a foreign kid who is waving it

error-filled sets.

Lars Burgsmuller was expected to be just as weak an opponent in the quarter finals. But the 22-year-old unheralded German came close to claiming the biggest victim of his five-year pro career. After dropping the first set in a close tle-breaker, the 139th-ranked Burgsmuller blanked the top seed 6-0 to even scores.



Rafter seemed to have been rendered powerless as the unpretentious German slammed forehand winners at will. Then, as if to teach the young brat a lesson, Rafter changed gears. Still, the decider almost went to another tie-break. before Rafter salvaged it with a couple of high-powered points which separate the men from the boys.

Rafter's explanation for the second-set slump was quite revealing. "I served badly at the start of the second set and then he got a bit of rhythm going. I took it a bit easy and relaxed, in order to conserve energy for the third set."

The 6000-seater Nungambakkem Stadium is one of the best in the country for tennis

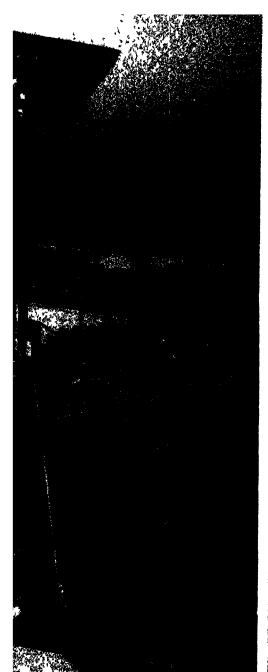
But isn't that risky business? "Yeah, it is, to an extent, but under the circumstances, that was the best thing I could have done. To be honest,

I do it quite often and it works." He may have a laidback approach to life, but Rafter obviously is a courageous man with oodles of self-confidence.

There was another catalyst which 'lifted' Rafter in the decisive third set -to get back at an unsporting opponent who was driving him mad. "The guy hit several mishits but not once did he say sorry. It's no big deal, but there's a certain etiquette which

one should follow. He drove me mad and, in a way, fired me to go for the kill," said Rafter, revealing another interesting facet in the Grand Slam champion's psyche.

Rafter is known to play his tennis the hard but fair way. After all, he was the man who reversed a line-call in his opponent's favour to Andrei Cherkasov at the Adelaide meet last year, a gesture which won him the 'Diploma of Honour' from the International Committee for Fair Play. It's a refreshing trait in this modern age of unforgiving, cut-throat competition. The problem is, he expects others to be fair as well. And





that's something he's unlikely to get most of the time.

Once he crossed the Burgsmuller hurdle, Rafter didn't drop another set en route to the title despite facing potentially awkward situations in his last two matches. Leander Paes had him in trouble briefly in the semi-final, leading 5-3 in the second-set tie-break.

Last year's champion Mikael Tillstrom looked strong in the second set, too, returning like a man possessed to go up 4-1. It was in those crunch situations that Rafter showed his champion's mettle, lifting his game a couple of notches to destroy the

Paes and Bhupathi with the doubles crown. Winning, sure, is becoming a habit with them

lurking assassins.

Even as Chennai rooted for Becker and mourned his exit, Rafter went through the process of eliminating his rivals coolly. It was only his third career singles title and a most welcome one after finishing on the wrong side in six out seven finals last year.

"Yeah, it's satisfying after missing out on so many last year, but I feel a bit strange too. It's a sort of an insult to win the title here after being unable to play Davis Cup a week ago.... seems as

if I didn't play for Australia so that I could play this event in Chennai. That's taken a bit off from my win here," an apologetic Rafter said after beating Tillstrom in the final.

That's Pat Rafter for you. Honest, straightforward, down-to-earth and friendly All basic qualities required to make a decent human being But do these attributes gel with a modern-day tennis champion? 'No' would be the most preffered answer.

It's up to Rafter to disprove the theory that nice guys don't always come first in professional sport. He's taken the first step towards that goal, but there's still a long way to go.

SHOOTING S

Despite the oppressive heat and humidity huge crowds of all ages queued up to have a glimpse of BORIS BECKER

BY AMITAVA DASGUPTA, CHENNAL

HERE was Boris Becker. Then there were the rest. If that sounds suspiciously similar to a chapter from the archives of Wimbledon, you are terribly mistaken.

The reference, for sure, is a tennis tournament involving the German but it isn't about one of his legendary conquests on the velvet lawns south-west of London. It is, in fact, much closer home—last month's Gold Flake Open in Chennai.

The King of Wimbledon, now a semi-retired pro who is choosy about his tournaments, was returning to the ATP Tour after a two-month lay-off. He flew into steamy Chennai early Tuesday, won a tight two-set match the next evening, ran out of steam in the deciding set to lose his second-round duel Thursday night. And, by late Friday afternoon, the 30-year-old German had checked out of the city.

His maiden trip to this country lasted exactly three-and-a-half days. Yet, it seemed as if a favourite son was re-visiting his birthplace after ages. Such was the reception Becker got, it even put to shade the adulation Chennai has often showered on its two home-bred tennis families—the Krishnans and Amritrajs.

Right from the day IMG—owners of the \$430,000 meet—announced Becker's entry, interest had been building up. It reached fever-pitch in the days leading to the tournament, with IMG and ATP Tour officials insisting that the German would surely play in Chennai but refusing to divulge details of his travel plans. Finally, once word spread that Becker had indeed landed in the city, the Gold Flake Open got transformed into the 'Boris Becker Open.

Kids turned up at the official hotel to have a close look at their hero, teenagers braved the sweltering afternoon humidity to catch the German at practice, middle-aged men and women queued up in hundreds to acquire a ticket for Becker's match. To



Boris Becker in action at the Gold Flake Open. The German made his maiden trip to India and stayed for exactly three-and-a-half days

PHOTOGRAPHS SCORP NEWS

Becker speaks to Craig Gabriel, IMG's Media Coordinator



beat it all, there was this rare sight of tickets for a tennis match in India being sold at a premium! For once, the 6,000-odd seats at the state-of-the-art Nungambakkam Stadium fell well short of the sky-high demand. There were far too many people keen on soaking in the atmosphere 'live.' It made for that kind of an ambience in which a Sachin Tendulkar or a Sourav Ganguly would have been privileged to perform.

Poor Vladi Voltchkov and Gerard Solves! They happened to be Becker's opponents in a tournament in which the fans refused to see any winner

beyond their beloved German. Mind you, there was no dearth of stars besides Becker There was the handsome US Open champ Patrick Rafter, the fabled Woodies and our very own Lee and Hesh. So genuine (and passionate) was the crowd's love affair with the three-time Wimbledon champion that they had to be reminded to applaud French journeyman Solves, who played some of the best tennis of his career to beat Becker. One banner summed up the mood in the terraces on that emotional Thursday night as the exhausted German approached defeat —'O Boris, don't break my heart!'
Thanking Chennaites for their support, Becker said the crowd "amazed" him. "They really know their tennis and applaud at the right moment. . it was a wonderful atmosphere out there in the stadium. I hope I can come back and play here one more time," Becker remarked at his last press conference in India.

The gratitude was surely spontaneous, but whether he'll return to Chennai as a player remains a big question mark as Becker has himself said this could well be his last year on the Tour. And that is the



source of IMG's major worry.

Much as tournament director Brian Cooney was pleased by the sheer volume of crowd participation, he made no effort to conceal a nagging thought which doesn't really augur well for the future of the Gold Flake Open. "Of course, people will flock to see Becker play in front of their own eyes, but the fans must realise that it's not possible to rope in somebody like him every year. Stars are important, but you can have a great tournament even without a Sampras or a Becker or an Agassi," Cooney quipped.

After the ATP Tour's disastrous launch in the country (as the McDowell Indian Open in New Delhi two years back), the superbly-promoted Gold Flake Open has had two memorable years in Chennai. On the face of it, the World Series event has come to stay in the Mecca of Indian tennis. But, as Vijay Amritraj observed the other night, there is still some way to go,

"When I managed to convince the ATP Tou. board to shift the Nice event to India three years ago, there were

Becker faces the media before the start of the Gold Flake Open

many who felt that there won't be much support for tennis in a country which idolises cricket. After watching the crowds these two years, however, I'm proud to have been associated with the decision to bring the ATP Tour to India. But one must remember that it's early days and the tournament needs another three-four years to come of age," Vijay said.

It's only around 2000 or 2001 that IMG expects the Gold Flake Open to break even. Just taking care of financial matters won't suffice, the organisers will also have to ensure that there is no downswing in the public's involvement. And that's the reason why Cooney is taking pains to 'sell' the theory you can watch some great tennis even if the superstars are not involved.

There are other practical problems, too. The timing of the event is such that it follows a Davis Cup weekend. Players involved with their country's

cause have often been loathe to play a Tour event the day after finishing what is generally a strenuous three-day tie.

Take the case of Leander Paes. So physically drained does he get after playing the Davis Cup, specially in oppressively warm home conditions, he is seldom in shape for competitive tennis the following week. This time Leander had no such problems after pulling out of the Davis Cup tie versus Italy, but the likes of Bhupathi and the Woodies looked jaded in Chennai coming off losing Davis Cup campaigns.

In fact, the Woodies and Rafter may well have ignored Chennai if it wasn't for the personal rapport Cooney enjoys with his fellow Australians.

The Gold Flake Open will need such 'connections' as well as the kind of luck which helped rope in Becker this time—he was desperate to come to India as this was one country he had never been to in his glittering career. Because, whatever be the fans' level of interest in tennis, they need big names to be drawn to the stadium.

Lagging Behind

There not at all surprised to note that the Pakistani cricket captaincy has changed hands 30 times in only 16 seasons. Cricket lovers are aware of the fact that the Pakistan Board carries the dubious distinction of being the worst-managed sports body in the world—no, not today—but since decades!

Despite this, the Pakistani cricketers have always contributed their best to the team and have not let the captaincy issue take a toll over the team's performance. None can deny the fact that the captaincy issue can change the face of the game and help boost the morale of the players, but if the 'commitment' by the team members are 'total'.

they just drive the point properly

to the opposition's home

ARTA MISHRA Cuttack

lmpressive

THAVE been greatly impressed by your magazine. It has yo much professionalism in it. The wide coverage of both harbarat and international events in such a comprehensive manner wally makes Sportsword a crossed less

The March issue was street.

The article on Martin Bings, was admirable. The Swiss Miss New Misses' has stolen my bear.

MILIND D MORE, Nashik

Whimsical

DESPITE a devastating knock of 177 runs by Sachan
Tendulkar and a score of
400-plus runs on board in the
Indian first innings of the third
Test at Bangalore, it's rather
inconceivable and shocking to
one and all that on the fourth day
itself, the Indians were
humiliated so convincingly by
the Australians

The Indian selectors should try some self-restraint from carrying out worthless experimentation or indulge in whimsical chopping and changing of the team

Had they taken the service of the efficient medium-pacer Venkatesh Prasad and retained the experienced Raiesh Chauhan, the situation could have been entirely different. The rookie off-spinner Harbhajan Singh proved too costly while the medio Harvinder Singh was savaged by the Aussies Ace leg-spinner Anil Kumble, however, managed to live up to the expectations of cricket enthusiasts with his stupendous performance (match aggregate 7 wickets).

Of course, the Indian batting

Harbhajan Singh (right)
and Harvinder Singh
proved too Costly against
the Australians

attack in their second essay took a severe beating vis-a-vis the secret weapon deployed by Mark Taylor in the form of pace bowler Michael Kasprowicz. Only Sachin Tendulkar and Navjot Sidhu brought some semblance of respectability to the total

As a professional cricketer, Saurav Ganguly should not allow himself to get carried away emotionally or feel despondent in the event of the umpire's verdict going against him. On the contrary, he should take everything, however unpleasant, in his stride like a true sportsman

T L DASGUPTA, Gondia (M S)

THE MOST PASSIONATE GAME ON EARTH

The World Cup soccer arouses amazing passions and frenzy amongst the ordinary fans and even Heads of State. It is something remarkable





HROUGH the passing years, political connotations have always added spice and tension to some World Cup matches. All World Cup matches are passionately contested but certain historical factors or outside forces have made some matches more passionate and eagerly awaited than others.

In the history of the World Cup, the most notorious tie was the Fl Salvador versus Honduras qualifying tie which provoked an armed conflict for several days. England versus. Germany is another tie which always rouses a lot of tension, a legacy of the 2nd World War.

In fact when the two countries met in the 1966 World Cup Final at Wembley, many English supporters of military background, came in their regimental attire, to inspire their team to defeat the old enemy

The Falklands clash had increased the tension of an England versus Argentina match from 1982 onwards. The newspapers particularly the tabloids whip up such mass hysteria prior to the game that fans and players become tense and such matches tend to become volatile.

The Cold War of the 1950s probably denied Hungary a chance to lift the 1954 World Cup The Magical Magyars" as they were popularly known, were unbeaten for two years and were favoured to win the Final convincingly However, over-confidence and erroneous selection such as fielding the injured Puskas, led them to trail the erstwhile West Germany 2-3 in the second half As no substitutions were allowed. Hungary were hampered However, they launched several attacks and the galloping major Ferenc Puskas equalised. A genuine goal was disallowed for a seeming off-side

The veteran Hungarian players and neutral observers still maintain that Hungary, then a Communist nation, had a raw deal because of ideological reasons. A victory for an Fastern Bloc



nation in the midst of the Cold War would have sent danger signals and it would be been interpreted as a victory for Communism. So the greatest sports show on earth, the World Cup, became a victim of politics.

In the forthcoming 1998 World Cup political rivalry could make the Group F league tie, USA vs Iran at Lyon on June 21 an explosive game Other possible explosive ties are in Group D involving Nigeria

The 1994 World Cup qualifiers is also piqued at the demand by the European Community which wants sanctions against their country for suspension of democracy and imposition of military rule. Nigeria has been unable to arrange warm-up matches in their country as Furopean nations have boycotted them. Hence slighted Nigeria's ties with Spain on June 13 at Nantes and against Bulgaria on June 19 at Paris could have a lot of tension.

If Fingland finish second in Group G and Argentina top Group H, then two bitter rivals can clash at St. Ftienne on June 30. This match has a political and football history of intense rivalry. The rivalry is not just because of Diego Maradona's infamous. 'Hand of God goal which enabled Argentina to beat Fingland 2-1 in the 1986 Mexico. World Cup quarter-finals.

Even this goal which was not disallowed due to an error of judgement by the referee and linesman assumed political connotations. Normally such a controversial incident is treated humorously in later years. However the Argentinians view this goal as a display of viveza 'the quality of craftiness so admited in their country The British press has also never lorgiven Maradona for this goal and the tabloids have always portrayed him as being diabolical. Such feelings persist because of the intense political build-up before this match, which was labelled Falklands Round Two "

No international football match has been preceded by so much political

Ferenc Puskas' genuine 'equaliser' was disallowed against the then erstwhile West Germany in the 1954 World Cup because of the Cold War in the Fifties mudslinging and popular jingoism, as the Argentina versus England tie in the 1986 Mexico World Cup

British tabloids notorious for their sensational stories tried to portray the English squad as an updated version of the Task Force which captured Falklands in 1982 The blaring headlines were, "Mexico alerts 5,000 troops" and "Argies here we come." The Argentine equivalents followed suit

Ace player Maradona was put on a par with General Jose San Martin, a 19th century revolutionary hero of Argentina, who helped liberate the



country from its colonial shackles. The ever populist 'Cronica' proclaimed. "We're coming to get you pirates."

Even a composed, philosophical player like Jorge Valdano viewed the game as a dialectical process in which colonialism would be overcome. The extrovert goalkeeper, Nery Pumpido bluntly declared, "To beat the English would represent a double satisfaction for everything that happened in the Malvinas."

There was intense media pressure and as Jimmy Burns reveals in his biography of Maradona, diplomacy and football had become inter-locked in the run-up to the game.

To cool down the situation, there were behind the scenes talks between the British and Argentine ambassadors. There was a phone call to their 1986 manager Carlos Bilardo from the Argentine president, Raul Alfosin that forced depoliticization of the game. The players were told not to make any explosive comments to the press.

Jimmy Burns cites in his book that prior to the match, Bilardo said, "Senores, this is a World Cup, this is football, if anyone asks you about the UK-Argentine relations, you just talk about football."

Pressure from the British government forced Bobby Robson (Manager in the 1986 and 1990 World Cups) to take a similar stance. Robson has however candidly recorded in his diary that his attempts to defuse the tension were not entirely successful.

He writes, "No matter how hard I tried to avoid the political undertones, I couldn't hide the fact that four years ago we had fought a war with Argentina. When I got the players together I told them not to become too involved in the political aspect. The same went for me too. We were here to play football and I am a manager, not a politician."

So if England meet Argentina in France, fireworks can be expected. The French Police will have to work overtime to curb the excited fans of both sides.

SUCH is the passion of the World Cup that even politicians and Heads of State cannot resist football's eternal charm. England's Labour Prime Minister in 1970, Harold Wilson took up cudgels on behalf of the late Bobby Moore when the latter was arrested for an alleged theft of a gold bracelet in Bogota.

The schedules of England's matches in the 1970 World Cup, influenced Harold Wilson's choice of a date for the general election. During a weekend meeting with his cabinet in

Diego Maradona: his infamous 'Hand of God' goal saw Argentina beat England in the quarter finals of the '86 World Cup at Mexico



FOCUS

March 1970, there were intensive discussions on the right choice of an election date. There was much speculation about what would happen if England were defeated just before the polling date.

Considering these factors, the I about party opted for Thursday, June 18 as the date for the general elections. It was the day after the semi-finals and England, as holders, with an outstanding squad which included Gordon Banks, Bobby Charlton, Bobby Moore, Terry Cooper, Martin Peters and Alan Mullery were favoured to reach the Emal

However, old rivals West Germany upset the calculations, beating I rigland 3-2 in the quarter-finals on Jime 14, four days before the general elections. The Labour Government's popularity plummetted. Poll analysts found that many marginal working class Labour supporters became hostile to their own government, in frustration at the surprise defeat to West Germany.

Four years earlier, Harold Wilson, much to the amazement of the then American President Lyndon Johnson, cut short a visit to the USA in order to hurry home. His motive was to attend the Final and get photographed with the England squad if they emerged victorious.

Harold Wilson got a lot of political mileage by identifying with England's victorious 1966 team. He shared the victory dinner along with his Chancellos of the Exchequer and Foreign Secretary and got projected as a people's Prime Minister.

In the same I mal iit July 1966, there was visible consternation and dismay on the faces of the normally phlegmatic Queen I lizabeth and Prince Philip at Weinbley when Wolfgang Weber equalised for West Germany 30 seconds before the final whistle

When Italy won the World Cup in 1982, the entire squad was accompanied by the Italian President Sandr i Pertini in a special Air Force



jet. On reaching Rome, the Italian President had a special lunch with the entire squad at his majestic Quirnale Palace residence. Identification with a World Cup football team enhanced the reputation of the President of Haiti. He daily booked a long-distance phone call to his country's football squad playing in their first-ever World Cup squad in far-off West Germany in 1974. Such extravagant expenditure at public cost was not condemned by the media or the opposition but instead it further endeared him to the populace.

Way back in 1954 when West Germany first won the World Cup, Chancellor Adenauer was so elated that he said, "Germany once again holds equal partnership in the society of nations." German ministers saw this victory as a symbolic climax to the post-War period of moral and physical re-construction.

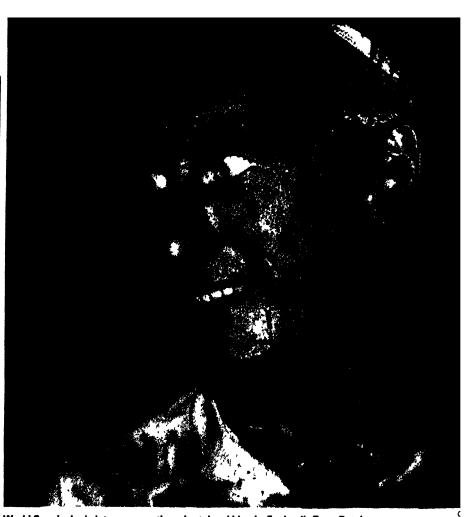
The World Cup strangely arouses amazing passions and frenzy éven amongst ordinary fans. In the 1954 Final, when Hungary rated by many as the best team ever was upset 2-3 by West Germany, Hungarians fans wept, rioted and created havoc on the streets of Budapest.

An infuriated mob smashed the house of the Deputy Minister of Sport. Anti-government demonstrations broke out in Budapest, leading to the dismissal of the Minister of Interior, the unfortunate Gero.

The human drama unfurled at every World Cup, is remarkable. When West Germany were shocked 1-2 by Algeria in the league phase of the 1982 World Cup, an irate German threw his television set out of the window of his third floor house.

A teenaged German boy, upset at the jingoism aroused by the World Cup, teasingly said "hurrah" at the surprise Algerian victory. To his surprise, he had a tooth knocked out by his irate father.

In the same tournament, five Brazilian fans were killed while indulging in riotous orgies to celebrate their country's 3-1 win over arch-rivals Argentina. However, when Brazil was knocked out 2-3 by the



World Cup rivalry is intense, sometimes brutal and bloody. England's Terry Butcher was severely injured in a clash against Sweden in a 1989 qualifier

ultimate winners, Italy the team needed a military escort on the way back home. Manager Tele Santana's house was guarded by armed police for fear of mob violence.

Even in distant Bangkok, an astrologer who had predicted a Brazilian triumph in the World Cup had his house attacked by an irate mob, furious at losing money by betting on the predicted champions.

Yugoslav striker Suskic, who was expected to be a prolific scorer in the 1982 World Cup, flopped and did not score in any match. He received a hostile reception on returning home and had his car smashed up and his house was pelted with stones.

Macabre passions are also aroused by the World Cup. There is the infamous war between two Central American nations Honduras and El Salvador following a dispute in their qualifier for the 1970 World Cup.

Besides this, in 1978, the infuriated Dutch fans who felt their country was

deprived of a World Cup win, by a partisan referee, attacked the Argentine embassy, demanding that diplomatic ties between the two nations be snapped.

Israel attacked Lebanon in the summer of 1982, calculating that there would be muted reaction and unrest at the invasion, because Arabs and the West Asians would be glued to their television sets watching the progress of debutants Kuwait. Leftist guerrillas in Argentina called a truce during the 1978 World Cup, so that all could unite for the common purpose of cheering the national team to victory.

Dejection at defeat assumes alarming social dimensions. When Scotland performed dismally in the 1978 World Cup, losing 1-3 to Peru and drawing 1-1 with newcomers Iran, instances of wife-beating and drunkenness increased in Glasgow and Aberdeen.

THE GHETTO



CINDERELLA

From the dangerous ghettoes of California, to the centrestage of women's tennis, VENUS WILLIAMS has come a long way. PAUL FEIN analyses the latest black phenomenon

N 1988 the late Arthur Ashe asserted that "given the same chance as others have had, blacks could dominate tennis in as little as 10 to 15 years just as they have dominated in other sports."

Even more controversially, Ashe also predicted that, if blacks did take over, "it will create problems because their behaviour, speech and dress is of just a completely different culture. Tennis is a very conservative game with deep roots grounded in Victorian English moral codes and traditions. Minorities—in particular, inner-city minorities— have cultural norms that are diametrically opposite to those of the upper-middle and upper-class white American standards."

The strange and startling saga of Venus Williams, the "Party Crasher"—as Sports Illustrated provocatively headlined her smashing U.S. Open debut as finalist—has already confirmed Ashe's prescient socio-analysis. But even Ashe, who wrote the book on the history of the African-American athlete A Hard Road to Glory, would have wondered how this intriguing drama would unfold in the coming years.

THE HYPE

Larger-than-life black athletes have for long evoked powerful emotions in race-sensitive America. When the flamboyant Jack Johnson, who chased white women, became the first

Hang 'em loose. 1,800 beads are required to have a hairdo like Venus. However, years of dedication and practice are required to become a player like her

black heavyweight boxing champion, whites rioted in several major cities. Muhammad Ali was vilified for opposing the Vietnam War and for refusing to be inducted into the U.S. Army, but "The Greatest," as he bombastically promoted himself, emerged as an irreverent hero to both blacks and whites, and as the most famous sports figure of the century.

The legend of how young Venus escaped from the concrete jungle of crime-ridden Compton, California, to grace the stately lawns of staid Wimbledon has been cleverly orchestrated by her idiosyncratic father Richard. With an Ali-like flair for sucking the media into his Venus flytrap, Williams engagingly relates how Venus and her younger sister Serena ducked bullets during their practice sessions by hitting the ground and rolling toward the gate. "There were more AK-47s than schoolbooks," says Williams, who claims in his newsletter that he was beaten up several times by gang members before gaining their respect. Fortunately, the local hoodlums in their notorious South Central Los Angeles neighbourhood generally took pride in the tennis prodigies and protected them.

Born fatherless and poor in Shreveport, Louisiana, Williams (Sr.) picked cotton as a teenager before moving to Chicago and then Los Angeles, where he set up a small security firm. He first took notice of tennis in 1978, two years before Venus was born, when he saw a girl receive \$60,000 in prize money for winning a tournament, far more than he earned in a year. So he said to his wife, Oracene, "Let's make two kids, put them in tennis and they'll be superstars." They already had three girls, and Oracene thought he was crazy.

As the legend goes, when the 4 1/2-year-old Venus played for the first time, she hit 550 balls without missing in about 45 minutes. By age six, she lived and breathed tennis so obsessively that Williams "took every one of the tennis rackets and broke 'em up" and wouldn't let her play for the next year and a half.

From age nine to eleven, Venus terrorised the southern California junior circuit, racking up a perfect 62-0 record, while Serena, 15 months younger, was almost as devastating. Williams dubbed Venus the "Ghetto Cinderella," and was convinced that she'd be his ticket to a better life.

"I really got into tennis so I could get a million dollars," admits Williams candidly. "I didn't have the right motives in the beginning at all. I was just like any other (tennis) parent then."

The even more warped junior circuit, according to Williams, showed him how parents intoxicated by the lure of potential fortune and fame, damaged their children. "You see all the white doctors and the way they beat their kids," recalls Williams "I've seen girls that were alraid to walk on the court with Venus, and ten times as afraid to walk off the court afterwards. I've seen parents say, 'You let that little nigger kill you like that.'" Disenchanted, Williams pulled his talented daughters out of junior competition forever.

With a Muhammad Ali-like flair for sucking the media into his Venus flytrap, Williams (Venus father) engagingly relates how Venus and her younger sister Serena ducked bullets during their practice sessions by hitting the ground and rolling towards the gate. "There were more AK-47's than schoolbooks," says Williams, who claims in his newsletter that he was beaten up several times by gang members before gaining their respect



Since no tennis champion had ever bypassed the valuable experience of junior tournaments, the move defied conventional wisdom and proved extremely controversial. It also heightened the legend, or as some cynics charged, the myth. The press, players, coaches, parents and the tennis establishment couldn't figure the Williams' out. Was the father, who called all the shots, crazy or crazy like a fox? And how good really were his much-heralded daughters?

The mystery fascinated the tennis world for 3 1/2 years after the family moved to Florida, where the highly Mother Oracine (seated middle, first row) is largely responsible for the Williams sisters to remain like normal children. Both are educated and have their feet firmly on the ground

regarded Rick Macci coached them at his international academy. Macci described Venus, then a 6'2" woman-child, as "a unique combination of Monica Seles and Martina Navratilova," and Serena as "the best athlete I've ever coached, boy or girl."

Talk may be cheap, but it was always colourful and usually fun with the Williams', and since both girls were told by Williams for years that they were destined for greatness, they genuinely believed it, too. At 14, a supremely confident Venus, sounding like the early Ali, crowed: "I could go beyond No. 1. With the way I play and my height and aggressiveness and courage and no fear, I could change the game. It's like Michael Jordan and the rest of the players in the NBA. He was a step ahead of everyone else."





The deadly Williams duo Venus and Serena Both met across the net at the Aussie Open, but it was Venus who eventually triumphed

Williams kept everyone off balance with his exaggerations, confusing comments and contradictions. He often asserted that 'any parent who allows his child to play protennis before she's 16 is crazy and should be shot", and then he did exactly that with 14-year-old Venus. He decried the pressure and great expectations heaped on the tennis whiz kids, while he hyped his prodigy zealously and bragged "Venus Williams gets more media attention than anyone in sport except Michael Jordan"

Cynics sneered that Williams was only trying to inflate potential endorsement contracts by refusing all bidders for several years. He also gave

the establishment fits by snubbing the many management companies that courted his family. Finally in 1995, Williams had Venus sign a five-year endorsement contract with Reebok for a reported \$12 million—more than world No.1 Martina Hingis' \$10 million deal with Sergio Tacchin—after she had played only one protournament.

Not only hadn't 14-year-old Venus played a tournament in 3 1/2 years, but she hadn't even practiced the week before her remarkable performance. A cunning iconoclast, Williams had taken his daughters to a Jehovah's Witnesses assembly, Busch Gardens and Six Flags, an amusement park in Atlanta. He sensibly explained "If you're happy and well-balanced, and no one is pushing

Since both girls were told by Williams for years that they were destined for greatness, they genuinely believed it, too. At 14, a supremely confident Venus, sounding like the earlier Muhammad Ali, crowed: "I could go beyond No.1. With the way I play and my height and aggressiveness and courage, and no fear, I could change the game. It's like Michael Jordan and the rest of the players in the NBA. He was a step ahead of anyone else."

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you to do something, then you can do your very best because you feel like you're doing it for yourself."

Venus and Serena would not burn out from "too much, too soon" as Jennifer Capriati sadly did. Venus played only three pro events in 1995, five in 1996 and 10 in 1997. Ironically, she was faulted for playing too few tournaments, thus stifling her development. But Williams, now Venus' coach and manager, didn't at all care what the so-called experts thought. The 54-year-old maverick told the TV program 60 Minutes: "Anyone who is a professional tennis player, or anyone who has anything to do with professional tennis, I don't think very much of them, no way."

For years, Williams had preached passionately about the importance of higher education, and his three oldest daughters were in college or graduates. "Ninety-nine per cent of the junior stars are not educated, they don't speak well, they don't represent themselves well," he charged. "I doubt if any junior stars have ever come close to Venus and Serena when it comes to education and speaking. My girls today can match the Japanese and the Germans in their high levels of educational attainment."

The hyperbole notwithstanding, in today's pro tour where college graduates are rare birds and a mere high school diploma is almost a badge of academic achievement, the Williams girls stand out. Venus takes courses at the Palm Beach Community College, while Serena attends a private school and is also college-bound. Consistent honour students, they show their intellectual enthusiasm by reciting Shakespeare to each other during plane and car trips and taking textbooks with them to tournaments (such as the 1998 Australian Open). Ashe, whose Richmond statue captures him holding a book high above his head, would have been most proud of that.

Venus' unforgettable debut at the 1997 U.S.Open coincided—or rather collided— with the debut of the Arthur Ashe Stadium, the centerpiece of the National Tennis Centre's \$254 million renovation, eerily confirming Ashe's prediction of a racial-cultural clash.

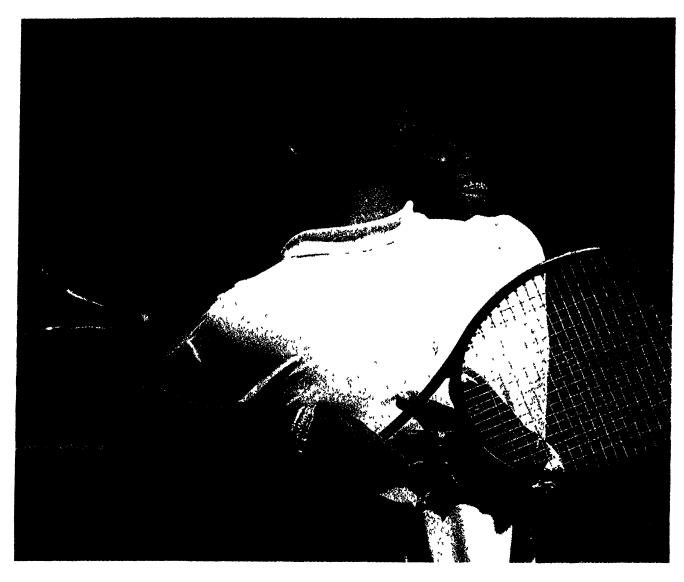
Venus Williams wearing 1,800 red, white and blue beads in her braided hair, was, as she noted, "different in every way," as she overpowered smaller and less athletic white opponents with punishing groundstrokes and explosive serves which measurd up to 118 miles an hour en route to the semi finals.

THE BACKLASH

Venus' past indiscretions and her father's seething racial hostility caught up with them and nearly overshadowed her heroic victory. Her penchant for boasting—such as defeating top-tenner Iva Majoli in March and afterwards claiming "I could have beaten her three years ago"-and habitual aloofness had turned off other players But some, like Irina Spirlea, suffered from "Venus Envy" and resented the tremendous media attention Venus, sexy Anna Kournikova, 15-year-old rookie Mirjana Lucic and teen queen Hingis received at their expense.

Hot-tempered Spirlea, who was thrown out of an Italian tournament for cursing and giving the finger to an umpire, had ousted Kournikova, Amanda Coetzer and No.2 Monica Seles at Flushing Meadow before slugging it out with Venus in the most riveting match of 1997. Venus escaped the first of two match points with a brilliant running backhand passing shot and pulled out a 7-6, 4-6, 7-6 semifinal cliffhanger. After winning, Venus jumped up and down in jubilation and cried out, "Oh man, this is just like a dream. I'm gonna have to calm down. I'm so happy."

Venus would soon have to temper that happiness though. Spirlea and Venus had collided during a second-set changeove, and it appeared that Spirlea had also "intentionally" kneed her when they collided. While Venus downplayed the incident, Spirlea angrily blamed it on Venus' imperious attitude, telling the media: "She thinks she's the f...ing



Venus reacts after winning her first Grand Slam title. Partnering Justin Gimelstob of the US they won the mixed doubles of the Aussie Open defeating the Czech pair of Cyril Suk and Helena Sukova

Venus Williams, and she's not going to turn. That's it. I'm sorry she feels that way."

Williams (Sr.) joined the Bad Dad's club of tennis by pouring gasoline on the fire. The eccentric, so-called coach, who infrequently attends his daughters' matches, phoned the Associated Press from Florida and termed the bumping episode "a racial thing" and called Spirlea "a big, ugly, tall, white turkey." Without citing evidence or naming anyone, Williams also charged that several women on the circuit had made racist remarks about Venus. The unproved

accusations outraged many in the sporting public and the media and prompted flat denials from several tour players.

Venus was eventually forced to respond to reporters' persistent questions about her father's allegations. With a wisdom her father lacks, 17-year-old Venus said: "I think with this moment in the first year in the Ashe Stadium, it all represents everyone being together, everyone having a chance to play. So I think this is definitely ruining the mood, these questions about racism."

Williams had played "the race card" and lost. His tawdry sideshow

poisoned the atmosphere, but Venus still stole the show with her spectacular tennis, courage and electric smile. Racism? Not at Flushing Meadow during that tumultuous fortnight where the overwhelming majority of spectators rooted for the black phenom. Racism? Venus played six of her seven matches on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court, and not even beloved Chrissie Evert received such royal treatment. Racism? The United States Tennis Association president Harry Marmion proclaimed. "Venus Williams is the best thing that has happened to American tennis for the last 20 years."

Who could disagree! If only Ashe were there to celebrate the splendid occasion he prophesied.

TENNS INDEX

WHAT the late Princess
Diana said about
Michael Chang after meeting
him at the Hong Kong Open
in 1995: "I love his American
accent."

WHAT Bjorn Borg recently confessed his extremely stoical on-court demeanor was: "Always an act."

UMBER of years since Rita Agassi, —who complained she was a 'guinea pig' for her father Mike's high-pressure scheme to produce a world champion—has spoken to her father: 18.

Molitor, Martina Hingis' mother-coach, considers the foremost threat to dethrone Hingis as No.1 in 1998: Lindsay Davenport.

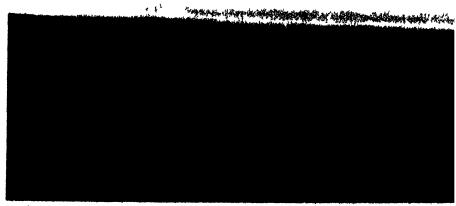
PORTS and music stars whom Mary Pierce had had flings with: Brady Anderson, Eric Lindros, Sand Roberto Alomar.

DLAYER that coach Nick Bollettieri says "should potentially become the top player in the world in the next couple of years": Germany's 19-year-old Tommy Haas

HAT Oracene Williams alleged that the other players in the women's locker room want her daughter Venus to be: "Stepin Fetchit."

GE at which all-time great Billie Jean King says she knew she wanted to change the sport of tennis and make it more inclusive: 12.





ADDRESS of the Patrick
Rafter Official Supporters
Club: 5 Degilbo Street,
Maryborough, Queensland
4650, Australia.

TELEVISION program that Gus Sampras says his brother Pete "will watch three times in a row even though he knows what's coming next": ESPN's "Sportscenter."

WHAT ranks No.2 as the most desired kind of jewelry in a recent American survey commissioned by Zales Jewelers: A diamond tennis bracelet.

UMBER of Steffi Graf's three on-court defeats in 1997 that were administered by Amanda Coetzer: 3.

HERE Andre Agassi is ranked among the world's athletes who earned the most endorsement money in 1997, as estimated by Forbes magazine: 5th (\$14 million).

GE at which 1920s
French superstar
Suzanne Lenglen won the
World Hard Court
championship in Paris: 14.

PERCENT of world-class men players who "have the ability to be in the Top 10," according to John McEnroe: 50 to 60.

of the 1997 U.S. Open television coverage by CBS and USA networks that consisted of commercial messages: About 40 hours.



ATHLE to finished No.1 of national heroes Os hidt and Ronaldo) hen Folha de Sao Paulo newspaper asked hundreds of Brazilian boys and girls who their favourite male sports heroes were:

Gustavo Kuerten.

HAT Pete Sampras says he is neurotic about:
Getting plenty of deep sleep.

A DDRESS of Mary Pierce's Official Aussie Fan Club: c/o Anthony Dever, 16 Ross St., Toowoomba, Queensland 4350, Australia.



HOW Donna instein, rat seventeen process, rates 16-year-old Anna Kournikova's fashion savvy: "For her age, she has incredible style—both on and off the court."

NICKNAME of 5'2" South African Amanda Coetzer: "The Little Assassin." TENNIS player voted the sexiest man in the world in a recent French poll: Yannick Noah.

THE reason the All England Lawn Tennis Club refused to have women tennis players tested for drugs at Wimbledon a few years ago: The AELTC told the official dope testers that "ladies don't take drugs." Nations where more women play tennis than men, according to a 1997 research survey commissioned by the ITF: Australia (60 percent) and Japan (51 percent).

Lading players who wrote a letter to The Times (England) protesting the fact that Daniel Prenn was kicked off the German Davis Cup team as part of Hitler's first Jewish purge: Fred Perry and Bunny Austin.

TUMBER of active pro tennis players among the 150 guests at the 1997 wedding of Andre Agassi and actress Brooke Shields: 0.

Venus Williams had won at Grand Slam tournaments prior to reaching the 1997 U.S.Open final: 1.

Pete Sampras's racket strings broke en route to winning the singles title at the 1997 Australian Open: 104.

FIRST woman to be awarded "Coach of the Year" by the Swiss Sports Federation: Melanie Molitor, Martina Hingis's mother-coach.

TV commercial that Andre Agassi said "brought a lot more grief than anything else": Canon's "Image Is Everything" camera commercial.

WHAT Mary Pierce used to think she was: "The female version of Andre Agassi."



REPORTS of the home and dre Agassi and Brogger and is bought in the Pacific Palisades area in Los Angeles: \$6 million.

PERCENT of all-time great Billie Jean King's endorsements that she lost when she disclosed her extra-marital affair with a woman in 1981: 100. THE average price paid (in U.S.dollars) for a tennis racket in Japan: \$153.05.

THE average price paid for a tennis racket in the United States: \$99.00.

TUMBER of different partners that Martina Hingis won doubles titles with in 1997: 5.

THAT Richard Williams, the father of 17-year-old rising star Venus, said it would take for Venus not to be the best player in the world by age 18: "An accident."

How Marcelo Rios in 1996 responded to a reporter who asked if his dark complexion and shiny hair were the result of Indian ancestry: "What if I called you a son of a whore?"

NUMBER of the 17 paragraphs in Sports
Illustrated's February 9, 1998 story on the Australian Open that were devoted to women players: 1.

OCCUPATION of Melanie Molitor's new love, Mario Widmer: Sports editor of Zurich's 'Blick', the largest circulation newspaper in Switzerland.

HAT Mike Agassi, Andre's father and first coach, used to lie awake at night and think about: "How tennis was going to be played when Andre was 22 or 23."

GIRLFRIEND of a leading player who posed topless on the front cover of the German edition of *Playboy* magazine: Daphne Deckers (Richard Krajicek).

NE motive Nick
Bollettieri said he had for
coaching Mary Pierce: The
hope that "some day Mary
might be good enough to beat
Monica"—who had
acrimoniously split up with
Bollettieri.

Compiled By Paul Fein

JUNIOR'S hundreds in Wes Africa, had he lad According to Ma against South Africa months back) was

Mark Waugh, the younger of the Waugh twins, is an integral part of the current Australian cricket team

BY RICA ROY

ARK WAUGH stands out as a symbol of peace and serenity in the Australian team. Amidst the two months of ridicule in the dust and heat in India and Sharjah, where the Aussies were made to think and re-think on their game-plan, there were occasional patches of brilliance in evidence, as well. Actually, one can never keep brilliance under wraps for long. And so twinkled the Waugh twins. The 'Junior' with his dash and elegance, steered their team in the final Test at Bangalore, notching up a classy 152. He did not actually pull chestnuts out of the fire at the Chinnaswamy stadium, but fashioned the task more casually for the 14th Test hundred of his career.

Most of Mark Waugh's run-fetching shots during the magnum innings looked regal, yet so casual: a trick only one batsman in a thousand can pull off. Probably he felt sufficiently self- confident, while the entire team-spirit was at a very low ebb. Those primarily on-side strokes represented the amount of self-confidence the junior Waugh had in himself. They bore his stamp, just as surely as the cricket afficionados identified with Greg Chappell, the most handsome batsman of his day,

20 years ago. Most Australian batsmen, by temperament and style, are not flowery. Chappell, going against the grain, batted as if he wore an emperor's raiment and Waugh though not quite so imperial, can easily pass for a prince.

Sometimes, if you half-close your eyes on a sun-lit day when Waugh is at the crease, and watch him play those strokes that more prolific batsmen wished they had, you can get an impression of what cricket used to be like, if the accounts of the old-timers are reliable. There is something of a morning dream about his batting, of the game played purely for pleasure, of "kissing the joy as it flies," as Waugh explains.

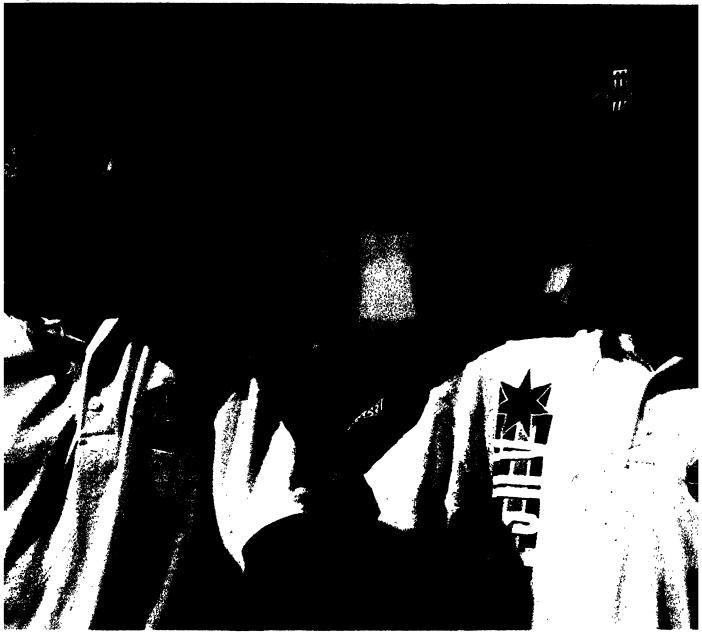
"Brian Lara and Sachin Tendulkar are superb players," according to 'Junior' and Steve Waugh is, "more copper-bottomed in his reliability," but for sheer watchability perhaps M.E. Waugh falls in the same league as Tendulkar and Lara. "If, for a lark, runs are awarded on aesthetic merit, he might easily make a hundred from ten balls every time he goes out to bat," reveals Ian Chappell.

Yet what makes Waugh interesting is the strength of will that his easy manner conceals. It is not so obvious as in his brother, but it is there. He is offended, and rightly so, when people think of him as being flighty. He could not have made match-winning Test

hundreds in West Indies and South Africa, had he lacked purpose. According to Mark, "It (the hundred against South Africa at Sydney, a few months back) was a sheer test of courage, patience and stamina to counter those wicked bouncers from Allan Donald that left bruises all over my body."

When Steve Bernard, the press secretary of the visiting Aussie side mentioned that "dandies are tough," he was most certainly talking of this man whose amiable public image disguises a steely purpose. Because Waugh has a dolphin-friendly face, it does not follow that he'll perform tricks for cheap applause. It is just that, when somebody plays with such little effort, people sometimes wonder whether they can really be serious. However, one shouldn't be mistaken that Mark is the man for occasions. for, beneath a casual veneer lies an intense human being who's deeply touched by the sufferings of lesser mortals.

On each of Waugh's visits to the subcontinent, according to the man himself, "has brought forth some startling revelations about the poor and their sufferings, the lepers and the downtrodden. It is here, in this country, in the city of Calcutta that I met the woman of my dreams—the mother of the downtrodden: Mother Teresa." Mark is one of those members of this Australian team who has an uncanny knack of staying away from the razzmatazz and the cameras, from the press and from publicity. Yet, his social contributions have been as much apparent in India as in Sri Lanka during their visit to the island nation in September, 1996, for the Singer Cup. When Chandradasa, the groundsman at the Premadasa Stadium took a nasty blow on his right hand from one of his shots, during a practice session, Mark presented him with his gloves, as a



Mark Waugh with his brother Steve. Both hide steely wills behind a calm exterior

gesture of goodwill. Such instances in cash and kind can fill up pages.

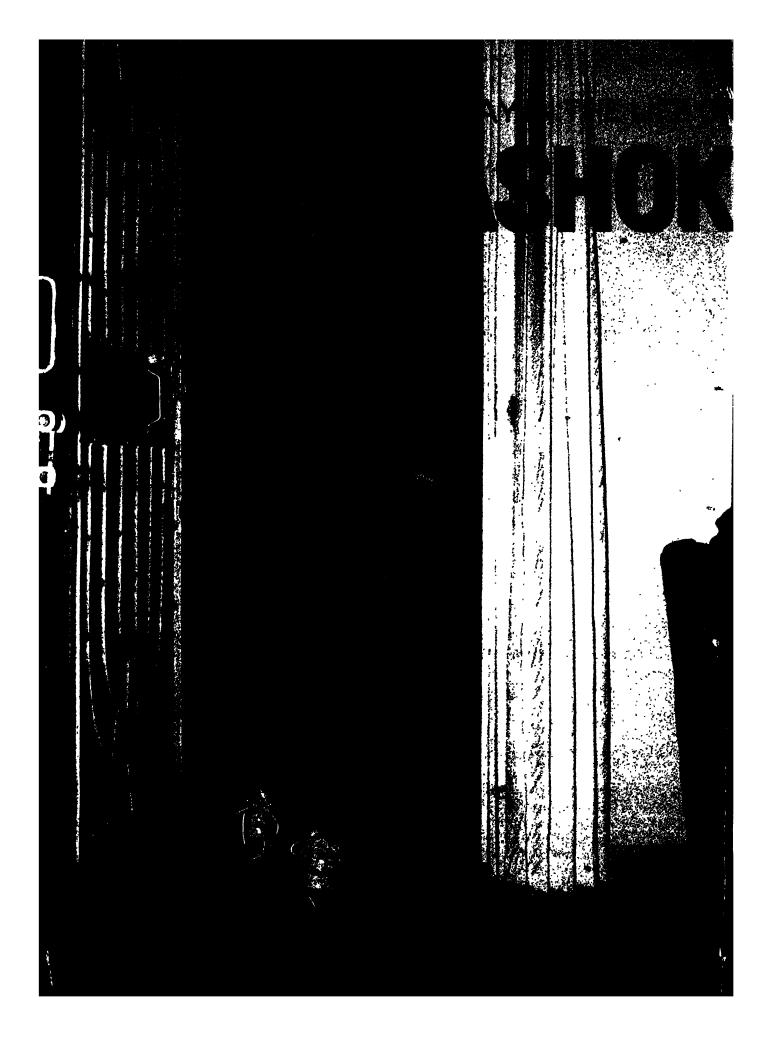
Yet, people are more aware of his casual image. The image that is even mistaken by cricket pundits, in whose opinion Mark Waugh is a maker of glorious 70s and 80s, which many feel should have been converted into centuries more often. True, but we also need batsmen who provide us with the sheer pleasure of watching him bat, and who can also wear the

bowlers down.

Steve Waugh who knows all about glory, believes that luxury players are precisely the ones a captain cannot afford. But in the successful Australian side that Mark has grown up, he's a necessary adornment. This is also required to be mentioned here because too often cricket talk is all about sledging, ball-tampering, over-rates, intimidatory bowling and what not. These is also the barrell-load of dressing room banalities of commitment, of no quarter being asked (nor, indeed, given), team work

and winning. But cricket as a game and as an art is much more than all these. It is also about aesthetics and the sheer pleasure the game provides.

When we bowl in our dreams, we imagine ourselves to be Wasim Akram or Javagal Srinath or Dennis Lillee. When we bat, we play shots with the unhurried serenity of Mark Waugh. The beguiling batsman had enthralled the subcontinent during World Cup '96 (his back to back centuries, if one remembers). For the admirers of sheer class and elegance watching Mark Waugh is nothing short of a treat.



KUMAR

Meet one of the greatest inside-right hockey players that the country has produced

BY MOVY LAPADIA

books. Name the family, which, for three generations, has represented India in a single sport. The answer: the legendary hockey family from Jhansi. The incomparable Dhyan Chand who won three gold medals in the 1928, 1932 and 1936 Olympics was succeeded by his talented son Ashok Kumar. He scored the match winner when India won the 1975 World Cup final against Pakistan and got a bronze medal in the 1972 Munich Olympics.

The next in the line is the niece of Ashok Kumar, Nineteen-year-old Neha Singh, daughter of Ashok's younger sister, Asha and Arun Kumar Singh is in India's squad for the forthcoming Utrecht World Cup. Ashok narrates, with pride, that Neha, like her grandfather and uncle, also plays as a forward. There is still more hockey talent in the family, Ashok's son, the chubby faced, suave 17-year-old Gauray, is also an inside forward of promise. He practises with the 'Air India Academy' at the National Stadium, Delhi, plays for 'New Stars' club in the local league and for his college, 'Kirori Mal' where he is a first year English honours student.

In fact, it is this family pride, sense of tradition and strong value system which motivates Ashok Kumar even now. Age has not mellowed his renowned fighting spirit. The spark still returns to his eyes when he recalls the numerous instances of injustice in Indian hockey. In his heyday, he was famous for his exquisite dribbling and delectable passes. He was also known

as a fierce competitor and a frank, forthright person, never wary to air his views

An example of his competitive spirit is narrated by his team-mates in the 1975 World Cup final at Kuala Lumpur. Pakistan led 1-0 and the heads of many Indian players were drooping. India then drew level and then Kumar scored the match-winner.

The family in front of the statue of the legendary Dhyan Chand at the National Stadium in New Delhi His lack of public relations and penchant to call a spade a spade led to a shortened international career. He played for India for just nine years, from 1970-1979. Ashok himself admits, "I could have played another three to four years but somehow was overlooked after the 1979 Esanda tournament in Australia."

In his illustrious career there are many successes but only two regrets. One of these regrets is that India did not win an Olympic gold medal during his playing years. He strongly



"Dada (Dhyan Chand) used to say: watch, observe and learn and that is what I have followed all my life, After every match, I would recall my game, especially my mistakes and try to rectify them."

feels that it was faulty selection rather than paucity of talent which prevented India from winning gold medals in the Olympics. With a glint in his eyes and anger in his voice, he says, "If the selectors had not obliged favourites and chosen a forward line of right out, Balbir Singh (Railways), inside right, myself, centre forward, B.P. Govinda, inside left, Inam-ur-Rehman and left out, Ghafoor or Shahid Noor or Harcharan Singh, we could have won the 1971



World Cup the 1972 Munich Olympics and the 1973 World Cup at Amsterdam. We were all in peak form during that period and could have outwitted any team in the world.

Another minor regret is that he was never considered as captain of the Indian team. Ashok recalls. I was only interested in playing and never tried to lobby the IHF or the selectors to become captain. Ashok admits that temperamentally he was incapable of currying favour and seeking obligations. He also cites an

example of family history which made him realise that playing rather than captaincy was more important Ashok says. During the trials for the 1936 Berlin Olympics my late father joined the camp late and so the great left winger Jaffer was chosen as skipper When Dhyan Chand joined the camp Jaffer just stepped aside and said Dada has come and now he is the skipper. I have always admired the grace and sacrifice of Jaffer's act. 'It was such incidents which inspired Ashok to behave with dignity and

grace in his career His love for hockey and values in life were moulded by his large but tightly-knit family

Ashok was a child of the 1960s the last generation before the television boom changed the focus of life in urban India. He recalls, "In my days it was sports and only sports. I played all games in my childhood hockey, football, badminton, gilli danda and even chess. We played barefoot on the streets and in the nearby park."

He wistfully recalls the name of

STALGIA



PHOTOGRAPHS, MOHAMMAD SHAFIQUE

alka Prasad, the secretary of the hansi District Hockey Association tho used to organise age-group purnaments in the city. Ashok played all these tournaments, under 12 ears, under 14 years and so on. It was hilst playing in such tournaments at he honed his skills and developed love for the game. As he says, "It was aly in Class XI that I really became issionate about hockey."

His legendary father (unlike many odern parents) did not believe in eaching his son or interfering with

his career. Ashok says, "Dada used to say: watch, observe and learn and that is what I have followed all my life. After every match I would recall my game, especially my mistakes and try to rectify them."

Ashok honed his skills by watching several greats of the past. He remarks, "I learnt dribbling skills and fighting spirit from Inam sahab (Inam-ur-Rehman) and the art of clever passing from the great Udham Singh." Ashok always considered Inam as his mentor, friend.

philosopher and guide. Inam is equally gushing about Ashok's prowess and says, "Ashok was the best inside-right in India in the 1970s. He was a classic, complete player, very talented, fit and a fighter. His control was a delight to watch."

Inam rejects the claim of many previous Indian coaches that Ashok tended to over-dribble. Instead Inam maintains that the coaches did not know how to handle Ashok Kumar. "He was a moody player and should have been handled tactfully." Ashok himself says, "I played hockey with feeling. With some players like Inam and Govinda or Ganesh (right winger), I developed telepathic understanding. We just knew when and where to pass."

He has many happy memories of his illustrious playing career. Ashok says, "The best Indian teams I played in were for the 1973 World Cup and the 1975 World Cup. We could have won at Amsterdam in 1973 but the crowd defeated us. They made so much noise that we often did not hear the umpire's whistle." Being chosen as the only Indian forward for the Asian All Stars XI in 1974 was also a great source of pride. Ashok greatly admires the sublime ball skills of inside-left Shanaz Sheikh and the speed and dash of right winger Islahuddin (current Pakistan coach):

About the 1976 Montreal Olympics debacle, Ashok feels the new surface (first Olympics on astro-turf), the heavy leather ball (weight increased as it got wet) instead of the synthetic ball as used now and the injury to Govinda upset the team.

As if maintaining a family tradition, Ashok also does not impart any personal coaching to son Gaurav. This latest inside-forward in the family admits that he took to hockey seriously only in Class XI and the man who developed his skills was his school coach (Modern School, Vasant Vihar) Gurcharan Singh.

Gaurav would like to emulate his illustrious father and become an international hockey star. He has the right credentials and was chosen best player in the inter-college hockey tournament at Delhi recently. Gaurav

however has twin ambitions and says, "I would like to become a pilot and an international hockey player"

Both children have imbibed Ashok's restlessness and indefatigable energy. His elegant daughter, Preeti works as a journalist in a local magazine 'First City', studied Korean at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), even whilst graduating in English honours. An avid reader, she has ambitions in television. Gaurav, besides playing hockey and studying, enjoys wood carving and sculpture. Both Preeti and Gaurav, like Ashok believe in living life to the full.

Ashok, though 48 years old, still leads a hectic life. At present, he works as a Deputy Manager in Flight
Services in 'Indian Airlines' and is often travelling six days a week. He travels abroad to the Gulf region and to several cities in India. His constant travelling leaves his wife Kamal lonely. As she says, "Both my children are now grown up and independent. So, at times, I do feel lonely."

When at home, Ashok Kumar is a bundle of energy Daughter Preeti quips, "He cannot sit still and is always tinkering with gadgets, opening them up and putting them right." Fitness is still a fetish for Ashok. When at home, he goes for a late morning run (about

9 a.m.), of about 3 kms on a grassy barren land near his locality. Afterwards, he does some free-hand exercises or skipping. Even when on flights, Ashok takes his skipping rope along and skips in his hotel room.

Relaxation for Ashok is singing songs or watching sports on TV. He says, "International football, hockey and boxing are the sports I like to watch. I enjoy the 'Ham Panch' programme on Zee TV and like listening to music and even singing along. It relaxes me. During my playing days, I always sang on journeys to entertain team-mates and before matches to relieve the pressure." Ashok's favourites when crooning alone is Kumar Sanu's 'Kuch Na Kaho' from '1942: A Love Story'.

Another form of relaxation is playing cards with wife Kamal or with the whole family together. They play for hours together. Ashok enjoys his wife's cooking and says it is a welcome change from the constant hotel food which he has to eat. He is not a fussy eater and even during his playing days, believed in the maxim, "Eat as much as required."



(Above):
Holding the Arjuna Award,
among the many trophies and
medels that he has won. He is a
Deputy Manager In Flight
Services, Indian Airlines

(Left):
Music is his passion. Here he is
doing a version of the karaoke



potatoes, achaar, carrots, green chutney, rotis, papad and a mutton dish. He does not like formal dinners. The family prefers settling down to a hearty meal on a cloth spread out on the floor and a variety of dishes to sample from

Till 1993 Ashok actively coached the Indian Airlines team Even now he is a useful performer in the veterans' team Ashok hopes to play in the forthcoming Utrecht World Cup for veterans. He played for Indian Airlines for nearly two decades, joining them in 1970 as a flight purser

"I played hockey with feeling. With some players like lnam and Govinda or Ganesh (right winger), I developed telepathic understanding. We just knew when and where to pass."

at the behest of K P Roy, former sports secretary of IA Sports Board During his playing days, he feared no opponent as he was confident of his skills

Ashok however admits that Germany had the strongest set of defenders he ever faced Several of Dhyan Chand's sons played hockey but it was only Ashok who excelled as an international. Passion for the game and diligent practise (which included one vs one games in his courtyard at Jhansi with his brothers) took Ashok to the pinnacle of success and glory



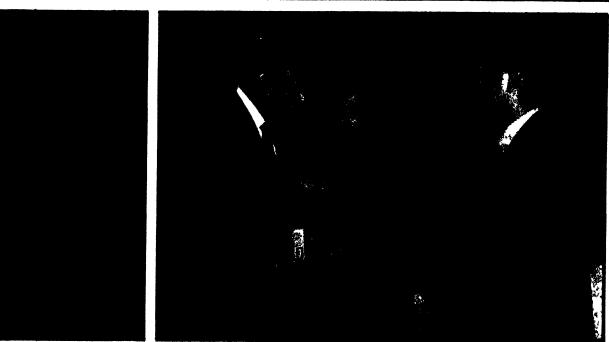




Hyderabad

SUPER-DUPER SI-





young Aparna Popat is that she took to the game of badminton by chance, rather than by choice. Her father, Lalji M. Popat, who deals with import/export through an engineering business, is a member of the Cricket Club of India (CCI) in Mumbai Neither her father nor mother Heena or sister Anisha were interested in badminton though they were interested in sports. And there's no one either in their family circles who plays badminton.

Thanks to her father's membership at the CCI, Aparna had a first

encounter with the shuttle at the age of eight. Anil Pradhen was her first coach in the CCI.

"I don't recall how I developed an interest in this game. But it was sort of love at first sight," said the 20-year-old Aparna, the new senior national badminton champion,

Currently ranked 71st in the world, Aparna's career chart is now complete with that senior national title won at Hyderabad This had eluded her in the Bharuch and Pune Nationals.

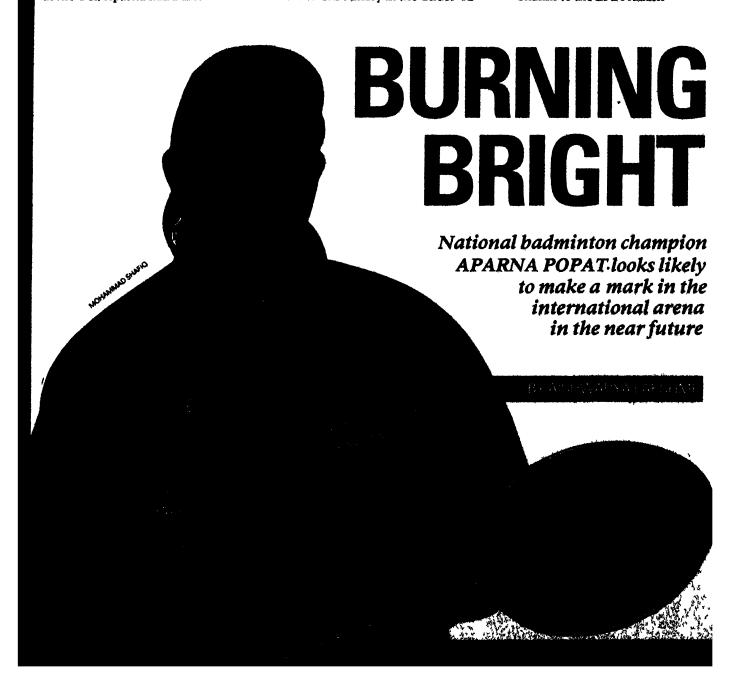
Her first big break came when she put it across Andhra Pradesh's Neelima Chaudhary in the Under-12

Nationals final in Bangalore in 1989.

After finishing runner-up to Nizmala
Kotnis in the Under-15 Nationals at
Kozhikode the following year, she
won this title for two consecutive
years in '91 and '92. She then swept
the Junior Nationals title for four
consecutive years between '93 and '96.

The World Junior Championship sojourn in Silkeborg, Benmark was a silver lining in Aparna's career. That she finished the runner-up there is now history and no Indian has gone so close She lost to Yu Hua of China in the final at 15-7, 15-3.

"Thanks to the BPL Prakash



Radukone Badminton Academy I could play in Denmark three weeks before the junior world championship. Thus, I could acclimatise myself to the conditions there which helped me to do well in the championships," recalls Aparna.

In fact, the Bangalore-based
Academy has changed Aparna's game
altogether. After finishing her 10th
standard, Aparna moved to the
Academy and did her 11th and 12th
standard education at Mount Carmel
College, Bangalore. She is now doing
her second year B.Com., through a
correspondence course from Bombay
University.

"The Academy has serginly done a lot of good to my game. Distance-wise weather-wise and facilities wise, I rate the Academy as the best. Earlier, I hardly used to do any physical training, At the Academy, we have a physical frainer in V.R. Beedu and on-court coathing comes from none other than Prakash Sir and Vimal Sir. They all have been so helpful and a great source of inspiration. The Academy has made me more fit and my game has more speed, power and consistency," explained Aparna.

The Academy provides accommodation for the outstation

trainers and transport to the practice venue is also provided. Since the last year, Abarna is a trainer sportsperson with the indian Oil Corporation and gets a supend from them. IOC also sponsors her trips abroad.

Besides the world junior championship soloute. Aparna's other foreign exposures include the Under-18 championship ('96) in Hong Kong where she got a bronze, the Asian junior invitation tournaments, twice in '95 and '96 in Hong Kong, the Danish Open ('95), the Malaysian Open ('96 and '97), the Malaysian Open ('97) tournament, in March this year, she made her debut in the All-England championships where she lost to the Danish No.2 Mette Pedersson in the second round.

This was after losing to the same Danish shuttler in the pre-quarterfinals of the Swedish Open a week earlier.

Aparna now has done Indian badminton proud by claiming a Satellite event in Paris which was part of the European Badminton Union. The French Open carried a prize money of \$10,000. Aparna defeated the top-seeded German Katja Michlowsky 11-8, 11-4 in the final. She exerted pressure right from the start, on her fancied opponent who is ranked 39th in the world.

In the first round, Aparna got the better of qualifier Mur Maria Louise of Italy and then defeated Andrea Oder of Hungary in the pre-quarters. She followed it up with a superb performance to overcome the challenge of top French girl Sandra Dimbour in a gruelling quarter-final that lasted 50 minutes. After splitting the first two games, Aparna trailed badly at 4-10 in the decider before winning the next eight points to earn a semi-final clash against Nicole Grether of Germany, Aparna won the semis 9-11, 11-7, 11-6.

Considering her age, Aparna's has been a stuneridous record so far in badmintpir. The unassuming lass, no doubt, is bound for more glory at the international level in the years to come





ASHOKE CHAKRABORTY

OW strange it is that Shane Warne's maiden Test appearance in India was his 64th in Test cricket. A finger surgery prevented him from unravelling his wizardry in the one off Test at Delhi in 1996. That Test match apart, the formidable Aussies have been in India for the first time for a full fledged Test series only this year. This clearly shows how ridiculous is the way the international fixtures are made up

The international cricket calendar, in retrospect, reveals that there is very little reason and logic behind the drawing up of most fixtures.

There are, of course, some regular contests. Like the Ashes series is played every two years between England and Australia. Similarly, England and West Indies battle for the Wisden Trophy at the end of two

BY CHINMOY ROY

years. Australia and West Indies vie for the Frank Worrell Trophy within two years. And the Pommies usually face the Kiwis every two years.

But now, here are the irregularities: West Indies and Australia haven't yet played a Test match against minnows Zimbabwe. This, despite Zimbabwe becoming an official Test playing nation in 1992.

In the 16 years since they acquired Test status, Sri Lanka has met West Indies only three times in Test cricket.

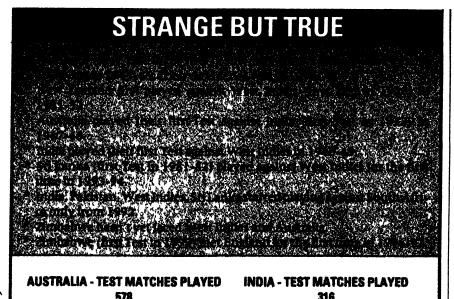
South Africa returned to international cricket in 1992. Strangely, West Indies has crossed swords with them only once since then. Their first full series is scheduled to be held in 1999 in South Africa.

The obvious question is: why there

is so much anomaly in the drawing up of international fixtures? Well, till 1992, political isolation played a big role in the case of South Africa. Before being banned from Test cricket in 1970, South Africa had cricketing relations with nations like Australia, England and New Zealand.

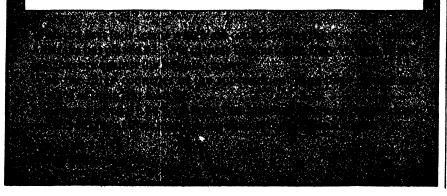
Political turmoil has been a major hindrance in Indo-Pak cricket ties. But that is not the sole contributing factor in the great anomaly. The stronger cricket playing nations are most reluctant to invite or tour lesser countries. A lesser team like Zimbabwe will hardly ensure good financial returns to the BCCI that a high profile side like Mark Taylor's Australia will.

Unlike FIFA, football's governing body, the International Cricket Council remains a mute spectator when fixtures are drawn. The ICC



		779		310				
West Indies	86	67	14 87%	Australia	51	50	16 13%	
Pakistan	40	41	6 92%	West Indies	70	49	22 15%	
South Africa	65	95	11 24%	Pakistan	44	45	13 92%	
England	291	121	50 34%	Africa	10	5	3 16%	
India	51	50	8.82%	England	84	65	26 58%	
New Zealand	35	42	6 05%		35	42	11 07%	
Sri Lanka	10	15		Srı Lanka Zimbabwe	20 2	15 5	6.32% .63%	

Here are the irregularities: West Indies and Australia haven't yet played a Test match against minnows Zimbabwe. In the 16 years since they acquired Test status, Sri Lanka has met West Indies only three times in Test cricket. South Africa returned to international cricket in 1992. Strangely, West Indies has crossed swords with them only once since then



only approves fixtures, but has no role in drawing them (This does not include the World Cup). This inexplicable non-interference of ICC has allowed Test matches across the globe to turn into meaningless exercises.

'Wisden Cricket Monthly' has introduced a new rating system on the basis of each team's performance round the year. The system is quite novel, but it has its shortcomings too

Isn't it easier trouncing New Zealand or Zimbabwe than Pakistan or Australia? And if a side keeps playing against the lesser sides its rating is bound to look good. Therefore unless all the teams start playing one another on a regular basis, the true picture will never evolve.

The bizarre cricket calendar has deprived spectators of different countries the opportunity to see some great cricketers. Sir Don Bradman, the living legend never played on Indian soil. It's a pity that India's first Test against Australia was in 1947-48, the year in which Sir Don bade good bye to international cricket.

The crazy Indian fans never saw the charismatic Aussie greats such as Greg Chappell, Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson in action. The epic battle between Indian maestro Sunil Gavaskar and Australian speedster Dennis Lillee was confined to three Test matches only. Lillee overwhelmingly dominated that series in 1980-81 in Australia.

The then Aussie skipper Greg Chappell, when asked to comment on Gavaskar said, 'I can't rate him highly because he didn't do well against us on the fast bouncy pitches Also, I haven t seen enough of him "

Just because India didn't play against Australia regularly, Gavaskar never got another chance to settle scores with Lilice If Greg Chappell couldn t rate Gavaskar highly, what will the Indians say of Shane Warne, especially after the beating he took at the hands of Sachin Tendulkar?

Well, Warne may lament, "I did not get enough Test matches to prove myself against India" If he does, can you ignore the fact?

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

NAME: ADVANTAGE TENNIS PRICE: RS15 PUBLISHER: PRIYA NANKI SINGH, 40-42 JANPATH, PEAREY LAL BUILDING, NEW DELHI - 110 001.

tennis yearbook published from India! If that sounds as weird as a wish that an Indian will win the next Wimbledon men's singles crown, then think again. And try and lay your hands on an issue of 'Advantage Tennis'.

Edited by the Delhi-based Priya Nanki Singh, 'Advantage Tennis' is a surprisingly slick production which is sure to floor any tennis follower. What strikes you first and foremost is the price-line. For the kind of glossy art-paper that has been used and the quality of picture reproduction achieved, Rs.15 is, indeed, dirt-cheap.

To Singh's credit, she does not merely rest content on making the final product visually brilliant. A lot of thought has gone into providing readers with a varied range of quality articles, too. There are interviews, analyses, educative pieces and reviews, as well as first-person accounts by three of India's greatest tennis stars (Vijay Amritraj, Ramesh Krishnan and Naresh Kumar).

The Steffi Graf interview is candid and personal, the likes of which the German superstar gives, maybe, once or twice a year. Her assessment of the 'arrogant' Martina Hingis ("she is a bit disrespectful but also very young, so a little boasting is allowed") makes interesting reading. And her assertion that she still has the same boyfriend (Michael Bartels) and is "certainly not pregnant" will come as bad (for prospective suitors) and good news (for those who want her to continue playing) for her legion of admirers the world over.

The Hingis interview provides an insight into the amazing psyche of a wondergirl ruling the woman's world. That she doesn't think too much of

Venus Williams as a tennis player ("she seems more interested in making a show with her pearls") reflects her attitude towards the game.

Nick Bollettieri's instructions on "How to hit the hell out of the ball" and "Jim Courier's workout" by renowned trainer Pat Etcheberry are sure to enlighten any serious student of the game. The good thing about all these articles is that all of them have been reprinted from publications which don't have an arrangement with the two leading Indian sports magazines.

The main aim behind the publication of this magazine, as Singh has stated, is to "promote and encourage tennis as a sport in India." And it is precisely here that question marks can be raised.

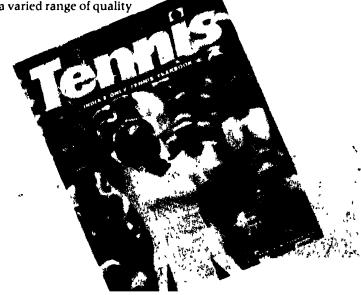
A tennis yearbook from India should have had a couple of articles dealing with the domestic scenario. True, there is not much to shout about Indian tennis minus Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi. But that itself could have been the subject of an investigative piece which would have exposed the amateurish manner in which the All India Tennis Association is running the sport.

Also, the likes of Prahlad Srinath, Syed Fazaluddin, Vijay Kannan, Vikram Venkatraghavan, Harsh Mankad—the second-string basically—should have found some space in this otherwise well-compiled issue.

The reviews of all four Grand Slam tournaments, along with the men's and women's singles results, are an excellent idea. Only the statistically-minded would have preferred the full draw rather than from the quarter finals onwards. And, with Indian interests revolving primarily around Paes and Bhupathi, it would be prudent to include the doubles results as well.

All said and done, Singh deserves to be lauded for treading on unconventional paths. After all, you need a lot of courage to bring out a tennis yearbook in a country which eats, sleeps and dreams cricket.

Amitava Dasgupta



Go for the Goal',

MUDERMAN

THE KING (GOOD TIME)

Y mother told me that car' was the first legible word I uttered recalled liquor baron and racing tycoon Vijay Mallya Speed and automobiles are my first love and I am not surprised that racing comes to me naturally confessed the 42 year-old bearded business magnate in his plush top floor office at UB House at Bangalore

Motorsport in India has come a long way since the first race was run between a Mr Varughese and an Englishman on the roads of Madras (now Chennai) city way back in 1909 The Indian motorsporting fraternity will ungrudgingly agree that Mallya in his various capacities of participant, sponsor and promoter has done a lot for the upliftment of the sport in India

A jet setting executive who travels the globe on business Mallya always



Different facets of Vijay
Mallya. When in office
(above) he is the typical
business tycoon, but put him
in a car (left) and his
adrenalin starts pumping, and
he often ends up winning
(inset)



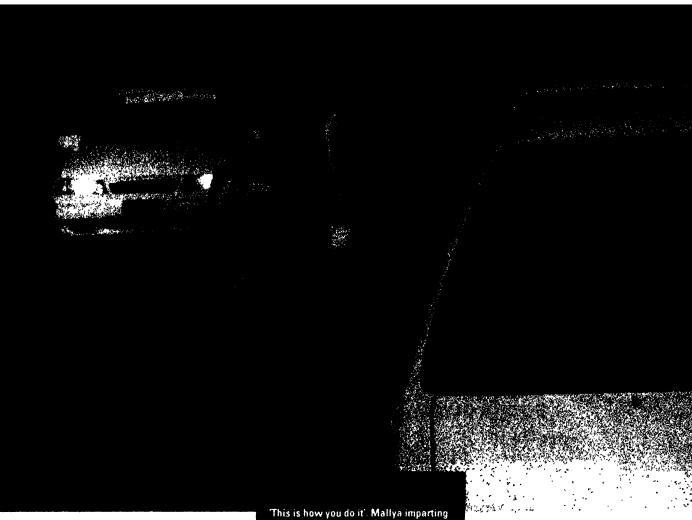
has the time and the inclination for motorsport related activities. It was in 1975 that Mallya drove his first racing car "I raced in Calcutta in the Fiat car that was built with fibre glass by Walford Motors of Calcutta" In 1976, Mallya blazed the Sholavaram Cement Track in a home-made special car called 'Cobra' "I then raced a Porsche 911 and later an Ensign Formula 1," reminiscenced the flamboyant business magnate

Born on the 18th of December in 1955, the liquor baron is a Ph D in Business Administration A hard working CEO, Mallya has always been the 'central point' behind the growth of the Rs 4,500 crores UB Group Besides heading the UB Group,
Mallya chairs atleast 12 other
companies, and directs many more
Winner of many professional awards
like the 'Global Leader for Tomorrow
instituted by the World Economic
Forum at Davos, Switzerland,
'Chevaliar Du Tastevin', 'Glory Of
India—Gold Medal,' and the Pride of
India Gold Medal,' Mallya is
renowned the world over for his
business acumen

Continuing as a member of various world business institutions and forums, he has established many charitable institutions and trusts and is a major sponsor of various sporting events like Indian football (UB

sponsors three of the best clubs in the country), cricket (sponsors of the West Indies Kingfisher team, and has signed on Ajay Jadeja and Saurav Ganguly) and specially motorsport The McDowell Grand Prix, and the yearly All India Motor Race Meet at Chennai are examples of Mallya's commitment to popularise motorsport in India Opined Mallya, "Motorsport is fast getting out of the cliche that it is only for the elite, and reaching to the enterprising and adventurous youth

'Indian motorsport has grown from the days I raced Those days we had only Ambassadors and Fiats to race and rally Spares were hard to



come by. Today, one has a wide choice and spares are readily available. It is the non-availability of technology that was ailing Indian motorsport. Our growth has been slow, but sure. The lack of sponsorship should now be over, for the MNC's who are coming in should be aggressive and liberal, in sponsoring individuals and events to promote their products."

Started by his father Vittal Mallya, Mallya (Jr.) took the reins of the UB Group when he was 28 years old. Since then, the group has grown into a multi-national business conglomerate of over 60 companies with an annual turnover which increased by 439% to US \$ 1.1 billion in 1996-97, despite the frequent devaluations of the currencies in many developing countries, including India, where the UB Group operates. The focal business areas of the UB Group encompasses beverages, alcohol, life sciences, engineering, agriculture and chemicals, information technology and leisure.

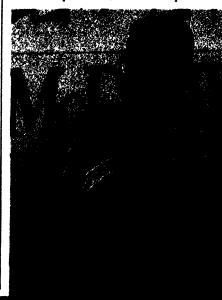
This is how you do it'. Mallya imparting some tips to a driver before the start of a race

The process of globalisation was initiated in the late Seventies by Vittal Mallya and Vijay Mallya by starting a small trading office in Singapore in the early Eighties. In 1988, Vijay Mallya embarked upon a major overseas acquisition drive which expanded, the UB Group's business to over 20 countries. The UB Group is currently pursuing opportunities in its core business in several of these countries making the group India's foremost multi-national.

Mallya, whose first love is motorsport, also happens to be a keen yachtsman and a seasoned aviator. His love for horses and horse racing is well known, and proof comes in the form of his well maintained stud farm in Bangalore, not to mention the

trophies his horses and jockeys have won. Over and above all this, Mallya is also a brilliant orator.

This motorsport enthusiast who is forever optimistic, never complains



Mallya with Narain Karthikeyan (right) who happens to be India's fone hope in motor racing at the world level. Karthikeyan is sponsored by Mallya



when it comes to sponsoring a deserving competitor Narain Karthikeyan, India's only Formula 1 hope is sponsored by the UB Group

MD of the Benetton F1 team during the latter's visit to India a year back

F3 season Mallya who is hopeful that the standards of motorsport would rise in India said, "I am sure that a leg of the World Rally Championship will be run in India in another 3 years, and a leg of the Formula 1 races should be run in India in another 5 years time "

Mallya who is the Chairman of the **FMSCI** (Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India) the supreme body of motorsport in India for the past 8 years, was solely responsible in bringing the international body's [(FIA) Federation Internationalle L' Automobile] President Max Mosley to India, for the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the FMSCI at Chennal

What ails motorsport in India today is the lack of proper sponsorships With a keen motorsport enthusiast like Mallya at the helm, Indian motorsport should before long, grow and gain in stature and popularity.

The 1996 Formula Asia Races and CEO Races at Chennai, and the Stayers and Sprinters Cup horse racing events provides us with a crystal clear portrait of Vijay Mallya the trend-setting sports enthusiast Shuttling between the motor race track at Irungattukottai, and the horse racing track at Guindy, in his personal chopper, Mallya used the time in the chopper to change into his business suit or into his racing overalls to be appropriately dressed for both the different occasions

Mallya's dream is Formula-1 and he is hopeful that Karthikevan would fulfil his long held ambition winning a Formula 1 race "It will be the best trophy I ever won in motorsport, if and when the young Narain Karthikeyan sits in a Formula 1 cockpit I will cherish that moment for ever,"reiterated Mallya

Ninety five million Indians are also going to be proud if Karthikeyan manages to fullfil Mallya's long cherished dream

ON 47 Thirty-nine batsmen in Test cricket history notched up tons in each innings OCCASIONS...

URING the 1997-98 season, the first Test match between Zimbabwe and New Zealand played at the Harare sports ground ended in a draw. For the home team, opener Grant Flower batted magnificently to become the first-ever player for his country to score centuries in each innings of a Test match.

After scoring 104 in the first innings, Grant Flower completed his second innings' century by hitting Cairns for a towering six. His 151 in the second innings is the highest-ever individual score for Zimbabwe against New Zealand. It was his 23rd Test match.

Including Grant Flower, so far only 39 batsmen on 47 occasions, have been successful in achieving this distinction of scoring centuries in each innings of a Test match.

Australian opener W.Bardsley (136 & 130) was the first cricketer in Test history to achieve this extraordinary feat. He achieved it at the Kensington Oval against England in 1909.

England's Herbert Sutcliffe was the first cricketer to score centuries in each innings of a Test match on two occasions. This record was later equalled by Australia's Greg Chappell and Alan Border; West Indies' George Headley and Clyde Walcott; India's Sunil Gavaskar and Sri Lanka's Arvinda de Silva.

India's great opening batsman Sunil Manohar Gavaskar is the only batsman in Test history to achieve this

BY KEKID DOODHAVALA

feat in three different Tests.

Twelve cricketers have achieved this feat while leading their respective countries. They are: Australia's Sir Donald George Bradman, Bobby Simpson, Ian Chappell, Greg Chappell and Alan, Border; England's Herbert Sutcliffe and Graham Gooch; West Indies' George Headley and Clyde Walcott; India's Sunil Gavaskar; South Africa's Allan Melville and Sri Lanka's Duleep Mendis.

Australia's Ian and Greg are the only pair of brothers to achieve this feat, and that too, in the same Test. They achieved this unparalleled milestone against New Zealand in 1973-74. In fact, it was only the second instance in all first-class cricket of brothers scoring a hundred each in

Aravinda de Silva did Sri Lanka proud by holding the world record of unbeaten centuries in both innings



both innings of a match. R.E. Foster and W.L. Foster were the first pair of brothers to achieve this feat, for Worcestershire against Hampshire at Worcester in 1899.

By scoring 247* and 133 in the above mentioned Wellington Test of 1973-74, Chappell set a new world record for most runs in a Test match. At present, the holder of this record is England's Graham Gooch, who scored 333 and 123 (i.e.a total of 456 runs in a Test) runs against India at Lord's in 1990.

Gooch, who bagged a 'pair' on debut, is the only batsman to score a triple century followed by a century ir the same Test. As Gooch was leading his side at Lord's against India in 1990, he also holds the world record of registering the highest score (333) as a captain.

During the 1948-49 series at Calcutta against India, Everton Weekes of the West Indies had scored 162 and 101, to create a marvellous world record of scoring centuries in five consecutive Test innings.

During the 1954-55 home series against Australia, West Indies' middle order batsman Clyde Walcott scored 126 and 110 at Port-of-Spain followed by 155 and 110 at Kingston to create a world record of scoring centuries in each innings of a Test twice, that too in a same Test series. In fact, in that series, Walcott scored five centuries, which is also an unbeaten record till today.

Against the touring, New Zealand

CENTURY IN EACH TEST INNINGS

	Batsman's name	For	V/S.	1st inn	2nd inn	Total runs	Venue	Series
	W. Bardsley	Aus	Eng.	136	130	266	The Ord	1909
- 1	C.A.G. Russell	Eng	SA	140		251	Durban	1922-23
	H. Sutcliffe	Eng	Aus	176	127	303	Melbourne	1924-25
-	W.R. Hammond	Eng	Aus	119*	177	296	Adelaide	1928-29
ı	H. Sutcliffe	Eng	SA	104	109*	213	The Oval	1929
	G.A. Headley	WĬ	Eng	114	112	226	Georgetown	1929-30
Į	E. Paynter	Eng	SA	117	100	217	Johannesburg	1938-39
H	G.A. Headley	WI	Eng	106	107	213	Lord's	1939
- 1	D.C.S. Compton	Eng	Aus	147	103*	250	Adelaide	1946-47
- 1	A.R. Morris	Aus	Eng	122	124*	246	Adelaide	1946-47
	A. Melville	SA	Eng	189	104+	293	Nottingham	1947
	B. Mitchell	SA	Eng	120	189*	309	The Oval	1947
- 1	D.G. Bradman	Aus	Ind	132	127*	259	Melbourne	1947-48
	V.S. Hazare	Ind	Aus	116	145	261	Adelaide	1947-48
1	F.D. Weekes	WI	Ind	162	101	263	Calcutta	1948-49
	J. Moroney	Aus	SA	118	101*	219	Johannesburg	1949-50
	C.L. Walcott	WI	Aus	126	110	236	Port-of-Spain	1954-55
4	C.L. Walcott	WI	Aus	155	110 109*	265	Kingston	1954-55
- 1	G.S. Sobers	WI	Pak	125	109"	234	Georgetown	1957-58
- (R.B. Kanhai	WI	Aus	117		232	Adelaide	1960-61
- 1	Hanif Mohammad	Pak	Eng Pak	111	104 115	215 268	Dhaka Karachi	1961-62
- 1	R.B. Simpson K.D. Walters	Aus Aus	WI	153 242	103	345		1964-65
- 1		lnd	WI	124	220	345	Sydney Port-of-Spain	1968-69 1970-71
- 1	S.M. Gavaskar L.G. Rowe	WI	NZ NZ	214	100*	314	Kingston	1970-71
ı	I.M. Chappell	Aus	NZ NZ	145	121	266	Wellington	1971-72
ı	G.S. Chappell	Aus	NZ	247*	133	380	Wellington	1973-74
ı	G.S. Chappen G.M. Turner	NZ	Aus	101	110*	211	Christchurch	1973-74
1	G.S. Chappell	Aus	WI	123	109*	232	Brisbane	1975-76
ı	C.G Greenidge	WI	Eng	134	101	235	Manchester	1976
1	G.P. Howarth	NZ	Eng	122	102	224	Auckland	1977-78
1	S.M. Gavaskar	Ind	Pak	111	137	248	Karachi	1978-79
ı	S.M. Gavaskar	Ind	wi	107	182*	289	Calcutta	1978-79
- 1	A.R. Border	Aus	Pak	150*	153	303	Labore	1979-80
- 1	L.R.D. Mendis	SL	Ind	105	105	210	Madras	1982-83
- 1	Javed Miandad	Pak	NZ	104	103*	207	Hyderabad (Pak)	1984-85
	A.R. Border	Aus	NZ	140	114*	254	Christchurch	1985-86
₩	D.M. Jones	Aus	Pak	116	121*	237	Adelaide	1989-90
1	G.A. Gooch	Eng	Ind	333	123	456	Lord's	1990
ł	A.H. Jones	NZ	SL	122	100±	222	Hamilton	1990-91
J	A.P. Gurusinha	SL	NZ	119	102	221	Hamilton	1990-91
I	A.I. Stewart	Eng	WI	118	143	261	Bridgetown	1993-94
I	G. Kirsten	SA	Ind	102	133	235	Calcutta	1996-97
ł	P.A. De Silva	SL	Pak	138*	103*	241	Colombo (SSC)	1996-97
1	S.R. Waugh	Aus	Eng	108	116	224	Manchester	1997
ı	P.A. De Silva	SL	Ind	146	120	266	Colombo (SSC)	1997-98
ŀ	G.W. Flower	Zım	NZ	104	151	255	Harare	1997-98-
L							, ,	

team, West Indies' Lawrence Rowe scored 214 and 100* at Kingston in 1971-72 on debut to create a world record Although, this record of a double century and a century was later on equalled by Australia's Doug Walters and Greg Chappell as well as India's Sunil Gavaskar

Sri Lanka's right-handed middle-order batsman Duleep Mendis is the only batsman to create an

identical score (105) in both innings

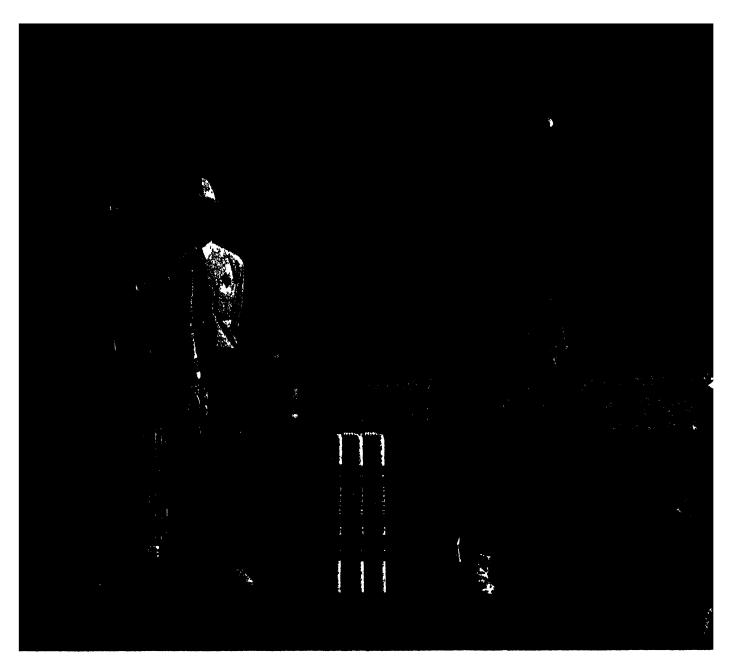
Aravinda de Silva of Sri Lanka holds the world record of unbeaten centuries in both innings. He performed this feat against Pakistan at Colombo in 1996-97

Alan Border is the only cricketer to score at least 150 runs in both the innings. It happened in the Lahore Test against Pakistan in 1979-80

The feat of scoring centuries in both

innings of a Test match was so far achieved 10 times against England, eight times against Australia, seven times against New Zealand, six times each against Pakistan and India, five times against the West Indies, four times against South Africa and once against Sn Lanka

Note. * Denotes not out



WAITING TO EXP

South African SHAUN POLLOCK has served notice of his talent as a bowler. Now, he's waiting to mature as an all-rounder

N July 16th 1973, a son was born to the former fast bowler of South Africa, Peter Pollock in Port Elizabeth. Pollock Sr. christened the child Shaun Macneal. Twenty-five rears down the line, the young man has fulfilled most of his illustrious

BY ANANYA DASGUPTA

father's expectations. His family, mainly his father, had dreamt that Shaun would one day become one of the mainstays of his country's cricket, and today Shaun Pollock is exactly that. Moreover, he is one of the best all-rounders in contemporary cricket.

Cricket has been a way of life for Shaun Pollock since his days in Northwood School, and he was passionate about the game for as long as he can remember. "I used to go



As a bowler Shaun Pollock is in a class of his own (left), but even as a batsman he is a tough customer to disledge (above)

attribute a big share of the secret to his success to his genes, there was no doubt in the junior Pollock's mind that he had borrowed anything else from his family.

Representing the country at the international level is every sportsman's dream. Shaun Pollock's memorable moment came in 1995 in the series against England. At the very first opportunity, he displayed his skills as a genuine fast bowler, taking 29 wickets from five Tests and seven one-dayers. He was a keen youngster waiting to flaunt his stuff in the World Cup. But the planned dream-run was destined to end as a hiccup. Not only did South Africa lose unexpectedly in the quarter-finals, after winning all their league ties, their latest bowling star managed to get just six wickets from as many matches: quite ordinary by his standards.

Yet, in the year of the World Cup, Pollock made another significant decision. The red-headed bowler decided to play County cricket and signed for Warwickshire as their overseas player, in the summer of 1996. Initially it was doubtful whether at 22, and with a new Test career to nourish he should commit himself to the rigours of the county circuit. He then considered

developing his game at the South African Cricket Academy. Finally, it was only after Dermot Reeve, the then captain of Warwickshire guaranteed that he would "avoid bowling this precious commodity into the Edgbaston dust." that Pollock decided to give it a go.

His county debut was quite a sensation — and Birmingham became his happy hunting ground. In one of his early matches against Leicestershire, Pollock took 6 wickets which included four in consecutive balls. Even today, Pollock refers to it as the magical moment of his career. This impressive performance prompted the Warwickshire authorities to reward him with the county cap, something that most players achieve after a long toil. But his days in England was cut short by an injury, which forced the promising youngster to opt out of the tour to India towards the fag end of the year. The South African thinktank did not wish to risk their valuable star on the slow wickets of the sub-continent.

Fortune does favour the brave, and Pollock was back against the Indians on their return visit, the following year. He was now an added threat to the opposition. The time-off had given the aspiring bowler the opportunity to

ALE

with my father to watch, my uncle Graeme play. It used to be great fun," he recapitulates. Today, Peter Pollock is the chairman of selectors of the UCBSA (the South African cricket Board) and the saying goes that it is always advantageous to have an influential father. But, in the case of our protagonist that extra pull from the father was not required as he merits automatic selection. Apart from the fact that he would readily

KAMAL JULKA



spend more time-with the willow. In the Wanderers Test Pollock spent three and a half hours at the crease for his 79 runs, a sure sign of uncle. Graeme's coaching. Graeme Pollock, the stylish left hander, could on his day singlehandedly demolish bowling attacks and is still considered to be one of the greatest batsmen of all times. His natural talent notwithstanding. Shaun works very hard on his batting. He plays with a perfectly straight bat is a clean striker of the ball, and has mastered most shots in the game.

However surprisingly Pollock in a MTV programme confessed that becoming a cricketer was not his only mission—there was a time when I wanted to be an actor and go to Hollywood—he said—Well—his performance in the tie against Pakistan in the Wills Quadrangular One-day series in 1997 had all the thrills of a blockbus er action movie His spectacular first over saw the home team crashing to 0-3. Saeed Anwar first ball—Aamir Sohail fourth—and Ijaz Ahmed—fifth—Shahid—Afridi succumbed in the fifth over and

Pollock s first spell read 6 overs, 1 maiden 15 runs and 4 wickets

their last tour there

Cricket does occupy the centre stage in his life, but it is not the only sport Pollock takes interest in. He has been a part of the Natal Mynahs hockey club, and playing golf is his favourite form of relaxation hobby. In fact, the advice he wishes to give to all young sports persons is that 'don't play cricket play golf. Sounds ironical coming from a man who has achieved such a lot in the game not just for South Africa, but even for Durban and Kingsmead where he learnt the basics of fast bowling from the legendary Malcolm Marshall.

Becoming a world class all-rounder may be his ambition but what Pollock yearns for most is an opportunity to beat the men from Down Under in their own country. The South African team with their do-or die' attitude came very close to a Test win against the Aussies in Adelaide, but Lady Luck walked out on them in the final stride.

In a game marred by controversial decisions which meant a lot of heart-break for Hansie Cronje's men Shaun Pollock's career best



performance stood out like the only silver lining to the ominously black cloud. On the ground where 34 years ago his father had taken five wickets, and his uncle had made 175 runs for a comfortable South African win, the lion-hearted fast bowler achieved the best bowling figures by a Protea in a Test match in Adelaide Oval. Bowling 61 overs in extreme conditions of 102F, the unexpectedly cool red-head with nerves of steel destroyed the Australian batting with a haul of 7 for 87 in the first innings of the third and final Test. The mammoth effort went completely in vain —the match was drawn and South Africa lost the series.

Success may have brought a lot of fame for the 24-year-old, but it certainly hasn't changed his jovial, down-to-earth attitude. Even today when the question arises about his toughest opponent, he willingly admits, "It's my brother in the backvard." An ardent admirer of Sandra Bullock, Pollock loves Italian food specially in the Villa Mora restaurant in Sandton. The tragic

Shaun Pollock (extreme left) is an

SHAUN POLLOCK	('S CAREER IN FIGURES
FIRST CLASS DEBUT:	Natal "B" vs Western Province "B" 1991/92 Natal "A" 92/93
HIGHEST FIRST CLASS SCORE:	150 Warwickshire vs Glamorgan (Birmingham) 1996
BEST FIRST CLASS BOWLING:	7/33 Natal "A" vs Border 95/96
HIGHEST TEST SCORE:	92 vs Sri Lanka (Cape Town) 97/98
BEST TEST BOWLING:	7/87 vs Australia (Adelaide) 97/98
HIGHEST ODI SCORE:	75 vs Zimbabwe (Johannesburg) 96/97
BEST ODI BOWLING:	4/33 vs Australia (Durban) 96/97
TEST M.	ATCH RECORD:
MATCHES INI 21 33	- organization
(Updated till 25th April '98)	Compiled by Ananya Das Gupta

death of Lady Di still bothers him --- "If I could only meet her, I'd love to find out the truth," he said. Wouldn't we

A deeply religious man, Pollock believes himself to be in debt to the Lord's contribution in his life. "I committed myself to the Lord and he has guided me ever since. Christianity does help me keep things in perspective both on and off the field Although I try to perform to the best of my ability at all times, I try with God's help to keep a level outlook on my performance whether they be good or bad," he says.

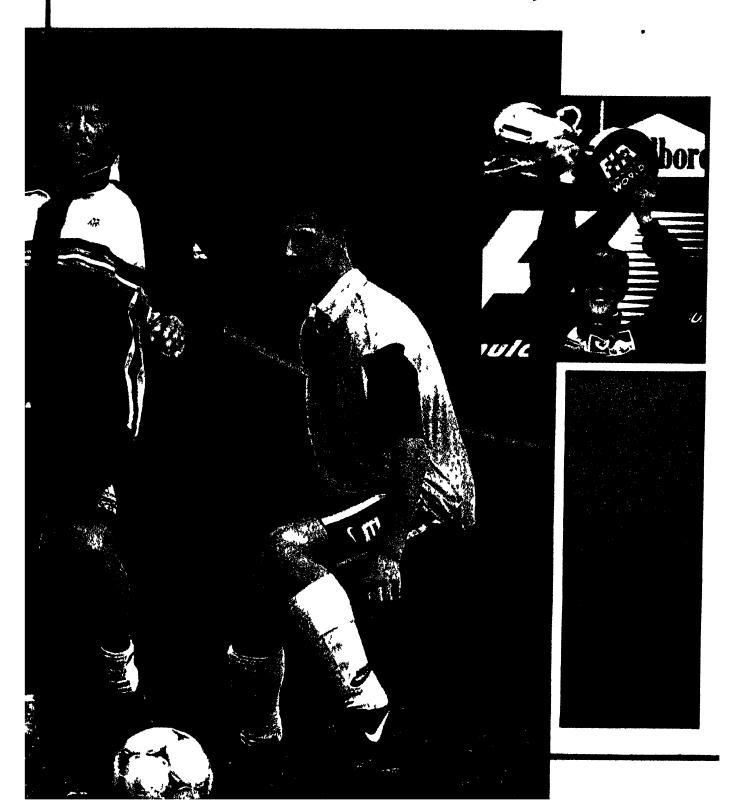
One of the pillars of a formidable team, he is often spoken of as the future captain. Ian Chappell while commentating during the series in Australia declared, "Shaun Pollock is one of the young men who'll surely end up leading the country." Jonty Rhodes and Allan Donald may be the most popular cricketing stars in South Africa, but the freckle-faced son of their chairman of selectors is not far behind.

Surely, the South African cricket lovers must be thanking their lucky stars that Shaun Macneal Pollock did not really take to the movies!



WINDOW E WORLD

Interesting happenings in the international sports arena









Top left: German Paul Eppel (79) shows some of his 3,320 trophies and medals displayed at his home in Ladwigshefen, in the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate He won all these awards in the past 35 years doing cycling, swimming, hiking and running events around the world. His name has been entered in the Guinness Book of World Records





PHOTOGRAPHS AFP





Below left: John McEnroe performs rock songs during the tennis rock night in Rotterdam. This was in celebration of the 25th year of the international tennis tournament held in the Dutch city

Left: German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (left) tries to evade the hugging of a giant ~ Euro Mouse' mascot while his wife Hannelore laughs during the annual sports gala 'Ball des Sports' of the German Sports Support Foundation in Wiesbaden

Mark Reid, the instructor of the David Leadbetter Golf Academy, tries to improve the swing of Feroze Ali, the Classic Indian Open golf winner in Calcutta. This was during the Royal Challenge Golf Training Programme at Goregaon, Mumbai. Most weekend golfers like the CEOs of blue chip companies and top flight businessmen also showed keen interest in the programme





-

freewheeling

H. India why did you have to go and blow it at the very end? You had them on the ropes and we were so enjoying it sitting here Down Under while the cricket team that proclaims to be the best in the world were made to look as helpless as the kangaroos that run out in front of your car on the highways in this part of the world

They blamed the food, the heat, the schedule and everything else for their poor performances, but in reality their only excuse was that they were beaten by the superior team.

And then you go and spoil it all, by losing the final of the tri-nation Pepsi Cup.

One couldn't face one's cricket-crazy colleagues the next day at work after having gloated over India and Sachin Tendulkar over the last month.

This time it was, "Well we won the one that mattered".

Suddenly, it seemed all that mattered was the one-day final.

And then to allow them to gloat over their win, you allowed them to complain about the lack of prize money for the tournament.

It was all over the radio, the television and the newspapers.

"After a tour of non-stop hardships and problems, it seemed appropriate Indian cricket officials should say farewell to Australia with the biggest blooper of the trip.

"Indian officials made Australian jaws drop when they announced the prize money for the Pepsi Cup final...there was none."

Oh, how they made fun of us! "Even though more than 200,000 spectators saw seven matches between Australia, India and Zimbabwe, that more than 400 million more saw the games on television, and that the series had a

nultinational company as a sponsor, Indian officials could not find a few thousand rupees to hand out to the winner."

It was being compared to Pat Rafter winning the Indian Open tennis tournament in Chennai, only to find his winner's cheque was "a plate of sandwiches."

It has been said in these parts that India took advantage of the fact that Australia was morally bound to play the one day series after the Tests. They called it "a poor effort."

Why do we give them reason to complain? Especially when they are so good at it? Especially when the boot is on the other foot.

For example, not much was made in the press here of Ricky Ponting's antics at a Calcutta disco. Yet imagine if one of our cricketers drank himself silly and misbehaved with Aussie women on tour? All hell would have broken loose. The press would have gone to town. And there would have been another point notched up for the growing racism in this country.

Azharuddin and company ought to have bested them and sent them back empty handed...well maybe with their white flannels in hand. No reason for complaints then. Except perhaps that baked beans are apparently not available in India.

They are available in Sharjah though.

And that's perhaps the reason why the Aussie cricketers so liked the tournament that followed their Indian tour. The fact that they were playing in the desert at the onset of the northern summer, suddenly didn't seem to enter their minds. Perhaps it had something to do with the over \$120,000 prize money on offer in the cricket oasis.

And all this time I was convinced when I read and heard guys like Shane Warne and the rest boasting how they were playing merely for the pride of their country.

Hot air really!

Well, my grandmother had always told me that beaked beans always caused flatulence.

Andy O'Brien



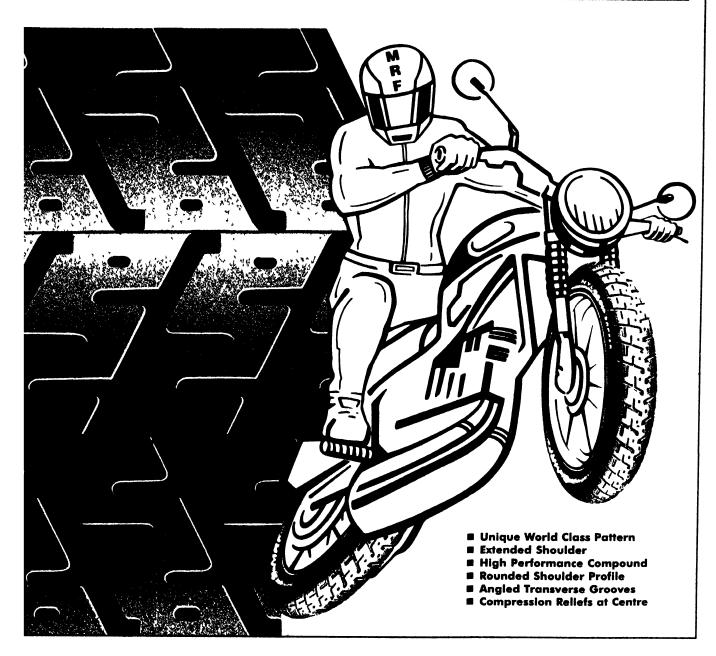
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WORLD CUP SPECIAL





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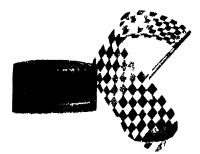
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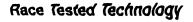
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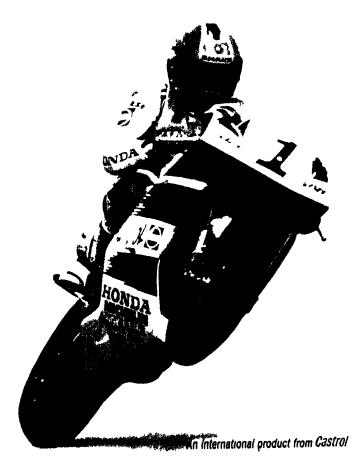
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CONTENTS

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A WORLD CUP
SPECIAL

Cover photograph of Ronaldo is by COLORSPORT

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BRAZIL

This is the question uppermost in the minds of the world's soccer fans

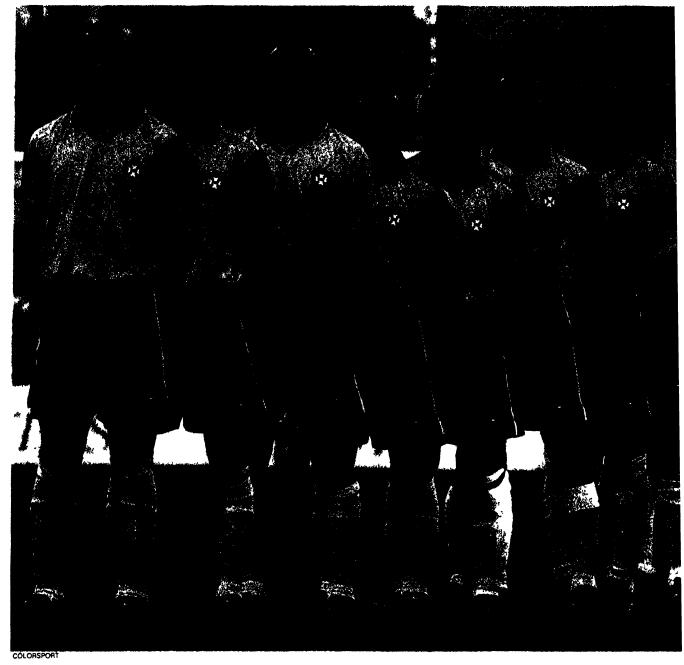
S inevitable as the night follows the day, Brazil are overwhelming favourites to win the most popular sports event of the year, the 1998 World Cup. It would take a bold person to bet against Brazil setting Paris alight and lifting the coveted

BY NOVY KAPADIA

favour.

Ever since it won the World Cup at USA in 1994, Brazil has dominated the FIFA/Coca Cola awards list. They

have won the coveted "Team of the Year" title for four successive years from 1994-97. In 1997, Brazil had a formidable, awesome international record. They won the prestigious Copa America at high altitude in Bolivia and the FIFA Confederations Cup in grand style at Riyadh and no



FIFA Cup on July 12, at the state of the art stadium at the Paris Saint Dennis. In full cry, very few teams can live with Brazil, let alone beat them.

There are several factors in Brazil's

The Brazilian team at attention just before the start of a friendly. With talents like Ronaldo, Romario, Roberto Carlos and Denilson, they have everything going for them fewer than 13 friendlies.

The most memorable triumph was the stupendous style in which they beat the dogged Aussies 6-0 in the FIFA Confederations Cup final at Riyadh Giving a glorious display of attacking, cohesive football Brazil dominated play with Ronaldo and Romano scoring three goals each

The only defeat they suffered last year was when they were flattened by a powerful, fast running Norway 2-4. This was a warm up game for Brazil, prior to the Tournoi de France, held in June 1997 to test the facilities for the World Cup.

The brilliance of their strikers is the other cause which makes Brazil favourites for the World Cup No team in the world has a pair of such devastating forwards. This magical duo can turn on the magic and for sheer unpredictability, amazing scoring ability and delightful, dibbling ability are unsurpassed in world football at present.

For sheer devastation Romario and Ronaldo can be compared to any of the previous great Brazilian set of forwards such as Pele, Jairzinho and Tostao in 1970 or Romario and Bebeto in 1994 or Pele, Vava and Garrincha in 1958 Also Brazil do not only rely on Romario and Ronaldo They have a lot of depth of talent, in the form of the gutsy Edmundo the cerebral Bebeto, the talented Savio and Tulio and the Black Panther' Osmar Donizete

It is goals that win matches and this makes Brazil the favourites. Their midfielders are also very creative. Stung by Pele's criticism that Brazil lack a settled side coach Mario Zagallo has done the unbelievable announcing his playing eleven for the opening tie vs \$cotland at Paris, five weeks before the kick off. Such is the creative strength of Brazil's midfield that coach Zagallo has dropped such talented players like Denilson and Djalminha from his

Candido

playing eleven

The left-footed free kick specialist Rivaldo makes a comeback to the Brazilian team, after being blamed for the loss in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics (the only major football title that Brazil has not won). Also in the playing eleven is Giovanni who was in britiant form at Barcelona. Juninho who, was hailed as a maestro in 1995.

PHOTOGRAPHS AFF

and 1996 does not find a place in the squad, as the coach thinks that he is not yet fully fit, after recovering from a leg injury

Brazil's midfield will have a lot of pace and flair as they will be ably

An ageing Romario has to combine well with Ronaldo in order to make another impact at France '98

supported by those brilliant wing backs Cafu on the right and Roberto Carlos on the left Carlos with the

most powerful shot in the world and 58 cms. thighs is a match winner in his own right. So which team can foil mighty Brazil. Their playing eleven for the opening tie is formidable, inventive and creative.

CONTENDERS TO THE THRONE

Other countries like Holland, England and Germany hope to beat Brazil at France '98

HE only other team in France 98 who could match the potency of Brazil's attacking duo are Holland's Denis Bergkamp, voted the Football Writers and Players Player Of The Year in England and the languid Patrick Kluivert. However there is a question mark on the fitness of both these players.

Brazil's major rivals such as Germany, England, Argentina and Italy lack their fire-power.
Germany is still searching for an ideal pair of strikers, with skipper Jurgen Klinsmann struggling for form. Also, the duo that coach Bertie Vogts plans to play, Oliver Bierhoff, the top scorer in the Italian league and pacy Ulf Kirsten, the leading scorer of the Bundesliga are not a patch on Romario and Ronaldo.

England rely solely on skipper Alan Shearer for goals, with

Teddy Sheringham; in a supporting role, Kaly has a ho of hardworking strikers like. Pieriugi Casiraghi and the white eagle (nicknamed because of his premature white-hair) Fahristo Ravanelli, speedy Filippo Inzaghi and Enrico Chiesa. The boy wonder Allesandro del Piero who is in sparkling form this season could play as a roying player.

Italy's coach, the pragmatic Cesare Maldini will stick to his preferred "Little and Large" two-man attack. The big men will be the target men whilst Del Piero will be the provider

Italy is clicking at the right time and could sneak through to the Final, However, their forwards are not as inventive as Brazil.

Novy Kapadia

Goalkeeper: Glaudio Taffarel. Defenders: Cafu, Aldair, Junior Baiano and Roberto Carlos.

Midfield: Giovanni, Dunga, Cesar Sampiao and Rivaldo.

Forwards: Romario and Ronaldo.

Another reason why Brazil are favourites is the luck of the draw. In Group A, they meet perennial under-achievers Scotland, Morocco and tenacious Norway. Except Norway, no team is likely to trouble Brazil. So they should emerge group winners without much of a sweat, an important factor in a month-long tournament.

Again as likely group A winners, Brazil will meet the group B runners _ up in their second round tie at Paris on June 27. Again their likely opponents Austria, Cameroon or Chile lack the style of game or finesse to upset Brazil. The only problem could arise if Italy, notoriously slow starters do not top group B. In case that happens, then a potential final, Brazil vs Italy could become the most sought after second round tie.

If matches go as per plan, then Brazil could be seriously tested only in the quarter finals where they could come across either Spain, Nigeria (who beat them in the 1996 Olympics semi finals) or even hosts France.

So there are many factors which makes Brazil favourites. However, history sounds a warning, a note of caution. Remember the brilliant Brazilian teams coached by Tele Santana which lost in the quarter finals of the 1982 and 1986 World Cups.

In 1982 Brazil, had a magical

midfield, skipper Socrates, Zico (nicknamed the 'White Pele'), Falcao and Toninho Cerezo, the left-footed wonder Eder and the brilliant Junior. Well, this team of superstars met their Waterloo, in a dramatic quarter final tie against Italy, losing 2-3, with Paolo Rossi scoring a hat-trick.

Then again, in 1986, Brazil had a lethal striker in Careca and fine midfielders such as Alemao, Socrates, Junior and Zico but lost in the penalty shoot-out to France in a quarter final match which ended in a 1-1 draw.

So individual brilliance does not always bring desired results in the exacting atmosphere of the World Cup. The sheer desire to win, fanatical commitment and the tunnel vision for success also counts. After all, Germany with their fabled team-spirit have a better recent World Cup record than Brazil despite not possessing so many talented players as the four-time world champions. Time will tell, whether Zagallo has blended his team of talented super-stars into a formidable team or not.

Form and tradition favour a Brazilian victory in France '98. Their all-time records are mind-boggling. Brazil is the only team which has played in all fifteen previous World Cups. Four times they have been champions and once runners-up in 1950. In the 1978 World Cup at Argentina they were third. They were also third in France sixty years ago in 1938. In previous World Cups, Brazil has played 73 matches, winning fifty (50), losing eleven (11) and drawing twelve (12). They have so far scored 159 goals and conceded just 68 goals in 73 matches.

Yet history is against Brazil. Only once in the history of the World Cup, has a team won away from its continent. In 1958, Brazil won the World Cup in Sweden. Otherwise, whenever the World Cup has been held in Furope, a European nation, Italy in 1934, 1938 and 1982, Germany in 1954, 1974 and 1990 and England in 1966 have emerged victorious.

Except for Brazil in 1958 when they beat Sweden 5-2 in the Final, and

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BRAZILIAN SOCCER

THE most common account of the beginning of soccer in Brazil involves Charles Miller, a Brazilian returning home in 1894 from school in England. When Miller packed two leather soccer balls and some rule books in his suitcase for the return journey, it was inconceivable that such a simple act would ignite a flame that would eventually consume a nation.

Who would have know that the entire country of Brazil would become so enraptured with the sport of soccer, that it would transform the entire way the country would look at sport, and profoundly affect the culture, emotion, passion — even the history of an entire nation.

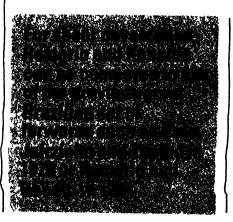
Miller, born in 1874 to an English father and Brazilian mother, had been attending Banister Court School in Southampton, where he had discovered soccer and, reportedly, become quite a good player. Returning to Brazil, he was considered the best player in the country until he stopped playing in 1910, but continued to be involved in the game as a referee until 1914. He died in 1953.

There were other accounts of the beginning of soccer in Brazil. Some say that as early as 1872, the priests of the St. Louis School in Itu, Sao Paulo, organised soccer games among their students, following the original rules of Eton, England. There are accounts that in 1874, English sailors had organised games on the beach at Gloria, Rio. Others say that in 1878, other Englishmen, sailors of the ship 'Crimeia,' played the first national scrimmage in front of the Princess Isabel's house in Rio.

For the official record, the first soccer game in Brazil was played in 1895 with a ball and uniforms brought by Miller at Varzea do Carmo, Sao Paulo. The teams were made up of Englishmen and Brazilians of the Gas Company, the Sao Paulo Railway, the London Bank, and the Sao Paulo Athletic Club.

The Paulista League was formed in 1901 and by the year 1910, soccer was a regular fixture at the MacKenzie College Athletic Association, the International Sport Club, the Germania Sport Club, the Paulistano Athletic Club and the Sao Paulo Athletic Club. The first soccer-only athletic clubs were the Rio Grande Sport Club of Porto Alegre, and the Ponte Preta Athletic Association of Campinas, founded in 1900.

The sport continued to grow throughout Brazil between 1900 and



Argentina in 1990, which lost 0-1 to Germany at Rome, South American nations have never entered the Final of a World Cup held in Europe. Often they are the victims of the cold and wet conditions in Europe. In the knock-out stage one off day can mean an early exit from the tournament.

The new FIFA rule which bans tackling from behind, could cause problems for Brazil. Their spiky-haired skipper, the 35-year-old Dunga's playing style is based on

1910. The Cariocas started playing the game in 1900 when Oscar Cox, another student returning to Brazil from Lausanne, Switzerland, brought soccer paraphernalia in his suitcase. The next year the Cariocas played twice against the Paulistas in Sao Paulo with both matches ending in draws—1-1 and 2-2. The Fluminense Football Club was founded in 1902 and by 1906, teams competed in the first city championship.

The birth of the Brazil national team was in 1914 when the Metropolitan League of Sports and Athletics formed an All-Star team of players from Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo to play against a team from Exeter City, England. The first official uniform of the Brazil national team was white; today the uniform consists of yellow jerseys, blue shorts and white socks.

The Confederation of Brazilian Sports (CBD), the forerunner of the CBF, was founded in 1914 and by 1923 became affiliated with the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the international governing body of soccer.

By the time Brazil won its first South American championship in 1919, soccer was played throughout the country. And in 1925, when the Paulistano club traveled to Europe and won eight games while losing only one, the popularity of Brazilian football began to take hold of audiences outside of Brazil. The magic of Brazilian football has continued to dazzle audiences throughout the 20th century, with the Brazilian players' exceptional ball skill becoming the hallmark for individual excellence.

Today, the Confederacao Brasileira de Futebol (CBF), or Brazilian Confederation of Football, has a membership of 551,300 professional and amateur players competing on 12,990 teams. Maracana, the world's largest stadium in Rio de Janeiro, can accommodate up to 200,000 fans for a single game. The second largest stadium in the country, Morumbi, is located in Sao Paulo.

The unparalleled support and popularity of soccer throughout the country, has produced much success for Brazil, which has won four world championships in 1958, 1962, 1970 and 1994.

Novy Kapadia

determination, tactical discipline and tough tackling. There is often a nasty edge to some of his tackling and he can be in trouble because of FIFA's clampdown on the tackle from behind. In Brazil's 2-1 win over Germany in a friendly match, at Stuttgart, Dunga was shown the red card by British referee David Elleray for a lunging tackle at an opponent.

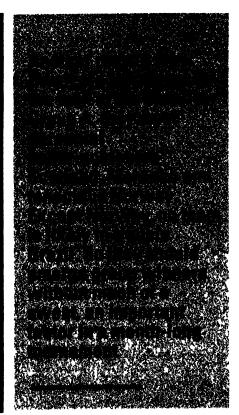
Besides Dunga, several other Brazilian defenders relish the lunging or sliding tackle. Flavio de Conceicao

Mario Zaga I Io, the manager, has a wealth of individualistic talent. Can be mould them into a Cup-winning team is the moot question



HOW BRAZIL HAS FARED IN PREVIOUS WORLD CUPS

Year	World Cup Venue	Finish
	Uruguay	
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7.50	France	
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BRAZIL: WORLD CUP RECORDS

Most appearances with Brazil national team: Djalma Santos, 100; Gilmar, 95; Rivelino 94; Pele, 92 (115 counting non-official competitions), Jairzinho 86; Zico, 82.

Most goals scored for the national team: Pele, 97; Zico, 68; Rivelino, 43; Jairzinho, 44; Tostao, 36. Most goals scored in a single game: Evaristo Macado, 5 (Brazil-Colombia, 9-0, 1957).

Most goals scored in professional league play: Roberto Dinamite, 150 (1971-89); Zico, 139 (1971-89); Serginho, 124 (1974-90), Dario, 104 (1971-83).

Most career goals by a professional player: Pele, 1184 (1966-1978); Arthur Friedenreich, 1,329 (1910-1930).

- Champions for the most number of times: Four times: 1958, 62, 70, 94
- Number of matches won: 49 in 73 matches
- Number of goals scored: 159 in 73 matches.
- Unbeaten in maximum matches in World Cup finals: 13 (won 11, drawn-2) from 1958 to 1966
- Player who scored goals in all the matches; Zairzinho-7 goals in 6 matches, Mexico, 1970
- Player who scored goals in two successive Final matches Vava 2 goals vs Sweden in 1958; 1 goal vs Czechoslovakia in 1962,
- The person who won the World Cup both as player and coach for the first time Mario Zagalo: As footballer: 1958, 1962. As coach: 1970
- Brazil is the only team to play in all the World Cup competitions
 From 1930 to 1998
- Brazil is the only nation to have won the World Cup outside their own continent: 1958, Sweden,
- Top Brazilian scorers in the World Cup Leonidas da Silva: 8 goals: 1938

Ademir: 9 goals, 1950
• Four goals in a match

Leonidas da Silva: Brazil vs Poland, 1938 Ademir: Brazil vs Sweden, 1950

Biggest Victory

7-1 against Sweden, Rio, 1950
Most goals scored in a World Cup

22 goals in 6 matches

Compiled by Hariprasad Chattopadhyay

who is used by Zagallo as a midfield destroyer, a role similar to that played by Mauro Silva in the 1994 World Cup, also tackles viciously. Another player fond of the lunging tackle is first choice stopper-back Junior Baiano. Left-back Roberto Carlos also uses the slide tackle frequently. Strict application of the FIFA clampdown on sliding tackles could cause trouble to several Brazilian defenders who use such a tackle as their main weapon in winning back the ball.

Zagallo, the veteran coach has also been criticised by greats like Pele and Socrates for not doing enough homework on his opponents. This flaw was exposed recently when Argentina beat Brazil 1-0 in a friendly tie at Rio de Janeiro and USA surprised Brazil 1-0 in a CONCACAF Gold Cup tie. Underestimating the opposition and internal wranglings could be Brazil's 'Achilles Heel' in France '98. Internal wrangling in a team full of characters and strong

personalities like Romario, Dunga, Junior Baiano, Edmundo and Ronaldo could surface in the World Cup. It was evident in the Confederation Cup, when a group of high spirited players, Junior Baiano, Roberto and Flavio Conceicao burst into the rooms of other players and began shaving heads with a razor.

Several sober and serious-minded Brazilian stars like Leonardo and Bebeto found this act quite repulsive. The Brazilian team did not play up to expectations in this tournament, except in the final when Ronaldo and Romario turned on the magic and beat Australia 6-0.

Zagallo and his newly appointed assistant Zico will have their hands full trying to curb such high-spirited gimmicks which could lead to internal wrangling. The Brazilian Football Association, known as the CBF, will also have its work cut out to stave off the inevitable hordes of agents who habitually surround the Brazil team hotel at major tournaments, hoping to secure transfer deals for the players. Zagallo was clearly exasperated during last year's trip to Europe at the attention focussed on Ronaldo's transfer saga. France'98 will be no different.

Aware of this dilemma, the CBF have appointed a younger man Zico to help Zagallo tide over all such problems. It is now to be seen how Zagallo and Zico blend as a pair. If there are too many arguments between these two strong-minded individuals, it could have repercussions on the volatile Brazilian squad.

No specific reason was assigned for introducing Zico. The CBF has also not clearly defined his role. Zagallo could see Zico as a threat. Such factors could also lead to dissension in the highly talented but temperamental Brazilian squad.

Curbing the volatile temperament of their players will be an important task for Zagallo and Zico if their highly talented team are to play to full potential. On sheer talent Brazil should win the World Cup but off-field factors could cause unseen setbacks.



THE STARS WH

Unheralded before the World Cup, here are a few profiles of players who can turn into superstars in France '98

BY NOVY KAPADIA

HROUGH the passing years, new tactical formations have emerged in the World Cup which have become the trend setters in international football. In 1958 at Sweden, Brazil introduced the 4-2-4 formation. Later in the 1966. World Cup, Sir Alf Ramsay's England known as the wingless wonders introduced a new concept of attack with the use of wingers.

In the 1970s came the brilliant 'Total football' from Holland with Johan Cruyff, Rudi Krol, Johhny Rep Johan Neeskens and others adding a new dimension to the whole concept of attacking football

In the 1980s, football became more defensive with teams playing in either the 5-4-1 or 4-4-2 formation using a lone front runner like Gary Lineker with Peter Beardsley tucked behind or two attackers like Jurgen Klinsmann and Rudi Voller

However more than the innovative tactical formations it is the players who make the World Cup an unforgettable experience. The fascinating aspect of each World Cup is the new stars that emerge. Players of potential who grow in stature during the World Cup.

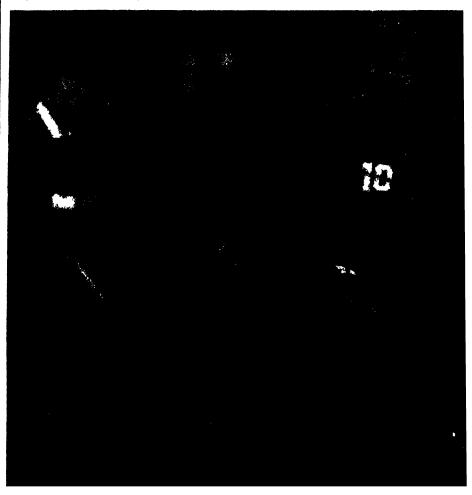
For 'mance in the 1990 World Cup', s rikers Salvatore 'Totok' Schillaci (Italy), Jurgen Klinsmann (Germany) and Claudio Canniggia (Argentina), midfielders Paul Gascoigne and David Platt (England), the agile midfielders from Cameroon like Omam Biyik, left back Paolo Maldini (Italy) emerged as the superstars

Four years later, in USA '94, came players like striker Oleg Salenko (Russia) who scored five goals in one match vs Cameroon, midfielder Krasimir Balakov of Bulgaria, left back I eonardo of Brazil, Saeed Oweairan of Saudi Arabia and wing Ariel Oretga of Argentina They were relatively unknown before the tournament commenced, but became stars later

France '98 will reveal the next generation of young superstars, the players who will take world football into the new millenium and beyond The following are some profiles of young players who could make a big impact on the world stage

RAUL GONZALES (Spain): Just twenty years old, this talented young forward is the great Spanish hope in the 1998 World Cup This bow-legged youngster is an instinctively intelligent footballer who has an uncanny eye for goal-scoring He has a brilliant left foot and is in the mould of Rivelino, the great Brazilian of 1970 and 1974 World Cup fame He is a very cultured player, with the audacity and talent to dribble past the toughest of defenders Near the goal, he is confident and can score some classic goals His only drawback is that he gets carried away by the big occasion and can become too cheeky and impudent with his ball skills

Raul Gonzales, at age 20, is the great Spanish hope



O WILL BE BORN

This precocious player is the most popular in Spain. He became Real Madrid's youngest debutant at 17-year and four months in 1994. Such is his confidence and talent that in his first month of big time football, Raul scored a brilliant goal and was involved in two assists, in a derby match for Real Madrid against Atletico Madrid.

This is Raul's greatest ability: to rise to the occasion and not get affected by big match nerves. A laid-back youngster, he says, "I don't get nervous at all."

The canny Spanish national coach Javier Clemente resisted the temptation to plunge Raul into the cauldron of international football. Clemente let him develop both physically and mentally. Raul was

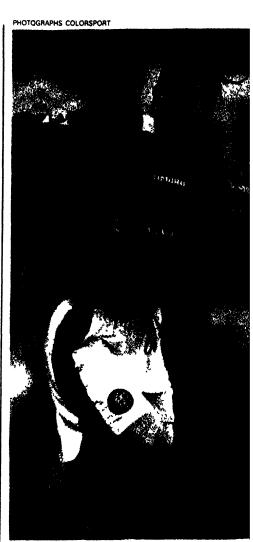
dropped from Spain's Euro'96 squad, which created a storm of protest amongst the Spanish media and fans.

However Clemente was unrepentant and kept Raul for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics squad, in which Spain lost 0-4 to Argentina in the quarter finals. Such is the impact that Raul had made in less than two seasons in Real Madrid that during the build-up to Euro'96, there were more stories in the Spanish press bemoaning his absence than about any of the 22 seasoned professionals who made it to England.

His first coach at Real Madrid, the former Argentine World Cupper Jorge Valdano was gushing in his praise for Raul's abilities. Valdano used to say, "Raul has that uncanny knack of creating something out of nothing—if there's a short cut to the goal he'll find it. I've never met a kid who's so single-minded."

France '98 will decide if the kid has grown up into a man. Raul has the talent but does he have the mental toughness and discipline to emerge as a superstar. Clemente and Spain are banking on him for goals. Clemente and his coaching squad are hoping that the media furore over his nocturnal habits and taste in leggy models makes way for the right kind of headlines in France'98. Raul will be 21 on June 27, 1998 and he knows that success in the World Cup will be the best present he can get.

DAVID BECKHAM (England): A versatile, crafty midfielder with a remarkable work-rate and mature temperament, David Beckham is the glamour boy of English football. He is an exceptional talent who can function wide on the right as well as in a central position in midfield. His engagement to 'Posh Spice' of the famous music group, 'Spice Girls', has given Beckham a glamorous aura.



David Beckham of England: crafty midfielder with a mature temperament

However, he is no playboy like the legendary George Best of Manchester United and Northern Ireland in the 1960s. Instead Beckham is renowned for his level-headed behaviour, mature temperament and willingness to learn.

England's coach Glen Hoddle greatly admires Beckham and considers him a vital factor in shaping the England team for the 21st century His talents were nurtured and honed in the brilliant Manchester United youth scheme. He is one of "Fergie's

Fledgelings", a group of talented youngsters who have recently emerged from the Manchester United youth scheme.

Others from the same youth scheme, who are in the England team for the World Cup are defenders Gary Neville and Philip Neville and midfielders Nicky Butt and Paul Scholes.

Beckham first came into the limelight, more than a decade ago, when he won a competition at a soccer school run by Bobby Charlton. His prize as the school's most promising youngster was a trip to Barcelona where he was trained by the then coach Terry Venables. Ironically, Venables did not pick Beckham to play for England during his tenure as the national coach from 1994-96.

However Hoddle has made him a permanent member of England's playing eleven and even used him as right back. Beckham's assets are his measured crosses from the flanks, penetrative speed and probing passes. He can split asunder opposing defences with raking, through passes. His ability to assist with equal flair in both defence and attack makes him a rare talent.

What makes him really world class is his goal scoring ability. On August 17, 1996 in a Premier League match for Manchester United against Wimbledon, he scored with an incredible 50 yard shot, rated by experts as the third best goal scored this century.

Beckham was born in East London and resisted attempts by Tottenham Hotspur to sign him as a trainee. He wanted to join Manchester United, who he had supported from an early age. He achieved his ambition and joined the Manchester United youth system. Except for a three month loan to Preston North End, a third division side, in the spring of 1995, Beckham has remained with Manchester United. With his rare talent and superb temperament, he could excel in France '98.

DEMILSON (Brazil): The Brazilian national coach created a major stir



when he dropped Denilson from his playing eleven for the opening World Cup league match vs Scotland on June 10 at Paris. He has a cultured left-foot and amazing dribbling skills. His

Denilson (Brazil) has a cultured left foot and amazing dribbling skills

explosive pace and deft dribbling have made him one of the most exciting young players in the world to watch. Denilson tirst played for Brazil on the left of midfield against Cameroon in November 1996. He was nervous and hesitant. However, Mario Zagallo, a shrewd judge of talent, encouraged him to play and kept selecting him for international matches.

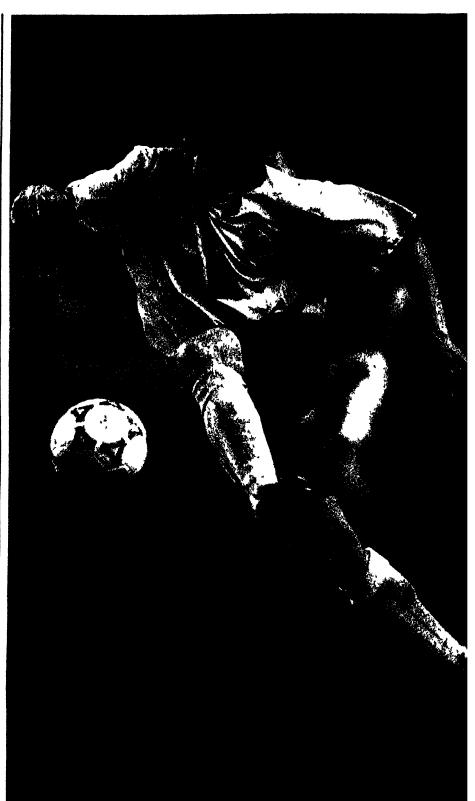
Gradually, Denilson developed into a classy, penetrative winger. However he is not just that. His work rate is adequate and he frequently rushes back to mark players in midfield. He has thrived in the national team since establishing himself as a first-choice player with his performances in Tournoi de France and Copa America.

Yet such is the depth of talent in Brazil that one bad match led to his omission from the playing eleven against Scotland. Denilson has paid the penalty for a casual performance against Argentina at Rio de Janeiro which Brazil lost 0-1. Thus, he has been replaced by Rivaldo. But Denilson is bound to play in later matches and will be yearning to prove his mettle.

Denilson who plays for Sao Paulo in Brazil is set to move to Real Betis of Spain after the World Cup, for a world record fee of 21 million pounds. Like many great Brazilian stars, he was born in a lesser privileged home in Sao Paulo and hitch-hiked to attend training sessions at his club, Sao Paulo.

ALESSANDRO DEL PIERO (Italy): The undoubted boy wonder of Italian football. He has all the technical ability, flair and experience to become one of the stars of France '98. His brilliant dribbling skills, deft through passes, ability to score amazing goals from incredible angles and sound positional play make him a player to watch. Del Piero likes to play in an advanced role, just tücked in behind a burly and tall front runner. He can create goals with his visionary passing and is also an excellent finisher.

The pin-up boy of Italian football is 1.73 metres tall and weighs 72 kgs. Thus he has the physique to resist hard tackling defenders. His skills and talent are supreme. However there is a question mark about his



Alessandro Del Piero is the wonder boy of Italian football

temperament. In Euro '96 he was also expected to play a star role. But he just faded away. Previous coach Arrigio

Sacchi did not have great faith in his abilities and Del Piero just could not play up to his potential. The current Italian coach Cesare Maldini has entrusted him with greater

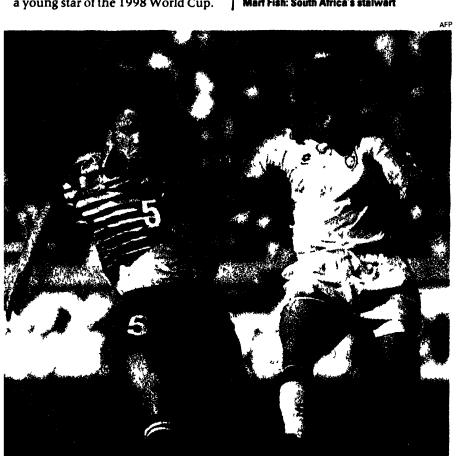
responsibility. He is thriving in his new role. Del Piero has scored 31 goals in all competitions this season and is being dubbed, 'Italy's answer to Rolando.' Critics feel that Del Piero has finally blossomed this year both as a goalscorer and a team leader. The duel between Del Piero and Ronaldo is set to continue once the World Cup starts.

Del Piero started his career with Foggia, a provincial team in Italy and joined Juventus in 1996. With his ability to play wide on the left or drift into attack from a central midfield, Del Piero is a very versatile player, whose audacious dribbling skills and cheeky goal scoring attempts could make him a young star of the 1998 World Cup.

MARK FISH (South Africa): This calm. composed and calculating 24-year-old defender is the stalwart of the South African team. He was signed by Lazio in 1996 after South Africa's triumph in the African Nations Cup. At present he plays for Bolton Wanderers in the English Premier League.

His sheer size, 6ft. 4ins, makes him a formidable defender. He has the physical presence to intimidate an attacker. Besides that, his stint in Italy has improved the timing of his tackles and anticipation. With his height, his aerial ability is impeccable. Mark Fish

Marf Fish: South Africa's stalwart



can play as a central defender or on the last line of defence. His tackling is crisp and sure.

Mark Fish started his First Division career as an 18-year attacker with Cosmos club. At his first club, Roy Matthews shifted him to defence. After Cosmos was relegated in 1993, he shifted to Orlando Pirates, which became the first South African club to win the prestigious African Champions Cup.

His marking, fine distribution and solid defensive play make him a player to look out for. Above all he has a remarkable temperament and plays better on the big occasion.

HERNAN CRESPO (Argentina):This 21-year-old striker is the new golden boy of Argentine football. He was a member of Argentina's team which bagged the filver medal in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Crespo was a league champion with River Plate of Argentina way back in 1994 and was voted the Young Player Of The Year. His goal scoring knack impressed national coach Daniel Passarella and he was capped in February 1995, against Bulgaria.

For two years, his international form was sketchy. Critics claim that he rarely produces his league form and goals for the national team. He cost Parma slightly over 3 million British pounds when he was transferred in 1996.

For his club he has excelled, but gradually he settled down with the national team and has scored vital goals. National coach Passarella has great faith in Hernan Crespo and he is the first choice striker. His height and swift movements have made him a perfect target man.

Crespo says, "I have great confidence in my own ability. When I go to sleep at night I dream of all the goals, I'm going to score." A strong, talented and cohesive Argentina will bank on Crespo for goals in France '98. He could, in partnership with Gabriel Batistuta or Claudio Lopez emerge as a superstar striker. After the 1998 World Cup, Crespo could become as famous as Batistuta or Stoitchkov or Alan Shearer.



GOLDEN MOMENT



A rare picture. One of soccer's greatest players Pele holds aloft the Jules Rimet Trophy which Brazil won for the third time. They defeated Italy 4-1 in the 1970 final in the high altitude of Mexico City

BOOKS BOOKS

TITLE: SUPERSTARS OF THE

WORLD CUP

AUTHOR: JOE PALMER **PUBLISHER:** PARRAGON, U.K.

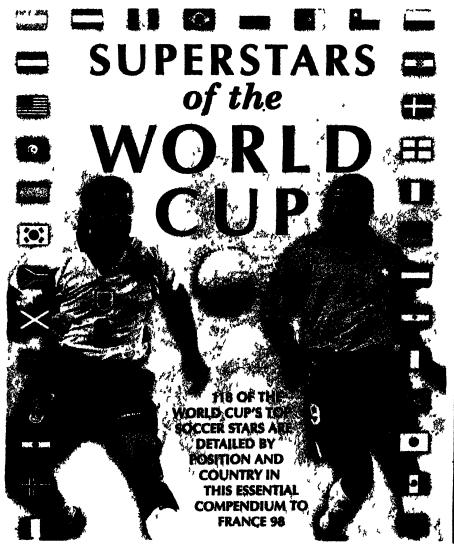
PAGES: 256 PRICE: Rs 695/- VEN before they line up on the playing fields of France the superstars of the World Cup have been captured in glorious colour and packaged in 256 pages of exciting action photographs Kick off your countdown to the World

Cup with this essential compendium, then settle down to enjoy the 1998 action

From its earliest beginnings in Paris in 1904, when Jules Rimet first conceived of an international tournament through to USA'94, 'Superstars of the World Cup' provides a key history to this greatest of football competitions. But the history is only a background to the excitement of the forthcoming battle of superstars

'Superstars of the World Cup'
brings you 118 of the very best players
from all 32 participating countries
The finest attackers from Al-Jaber of
Saudi Arabia to Zola of Italy The
crafty mid-fielders from Aspe of
Mexico to Zidane of France The most
impregnable defenders from Adams
of England to Ziego of Germany And
goalkeepers who will make or break
their teams, from Friedel of the USA to
Zubizarreta of Spain

There is also the history of the 68-year-old tournament, its heroes and villains, from Ferenc Puskas, Bobby Charlton, Franz Beckenbauer and Pele to René Higuita, Ken Aston, Harald Schumacher and Diego Maradona plus extensive player profiles, in depth team analysis and complete statistics



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THE TEAMS FRANCE '98 TO WATCH **OUT FOR**



BRAZIL

* WHEN they are attacking, there's no one to touch them. The present yellow-shirt-blue-pant team look a far more adventurous, entertaining side than the diligent winners of the 1994 World Cup Final in the United States.

The Brazilian team which will represent the country at France '96. Despite having such a

If the brilliance of the strike duo of Romario, who was the most outstanding player of USA '94, and Bebeto enabled Brazil to win her fourth World Cup title, this time around if they do an encore at France

'98 it will be scripted by none other than Romario and the prolific goal-scorer Ronaldo. Voted best player in the world, the soloist Ronaldo has been enthralling the football fraternity the world over with his exceptional pace, ball control and flair. But what about Edmundo "The Animal"? He has such a complicated relationship with veteran coach

Mario Zagallo.

Last June, when he hit an opponent during a match, Zagallo dropped him from the team saying that the striker needed psychiatric treatment. Edmundo responded by scoring spectacular goals, and broke the Brazilian championships goal-scoring record by scoring 29 goals, thus forcing his recall.

It cannot be denied that Edmundo is one of the most lethal strikers in the world. The opposition will have to work hard to contain him along with Romario and Ronaldo.

The team has two very potential left-foot players in the vital midfield in the form of Djalminha, the son of a former Brazil international Djalma Dias and Denilson. For the opening match, Djalminha has got the nod over the dazzling Denilson. Like Denilson, he has sublime skills.

Brazil, however has a chink in their armour. Their defence doesn't look too convincing. They have Cafu, Roberto Carlos, Junior Baiano and Aldair. Carlos is famous for his amazing, swerving free kicks but has a tendency to move forward, leaving open spaces at the back. Then, there is goalkeeper Claudio Taffarel. He is playing in his third World Cup but at 32, is ageing. Will he be able to keep his reflexes sharp and sure at the end of a gruelling month of play? Only time will tell.

World Cup record: All Finals - 1930, 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1972, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994.

Best performance: Winners: 1958, 1962, 1970, 1994.

GERMANY

ORE often than not, formidable Germany has been a favourite of the bookies. They have a remarkable World Cup record. It means that they are potential finalists, despite the occasional misunderstandings that take place within the camp and inconsistent



Former captain Lother Mattheous has been recalled to play for Germany

pre-tournament form. Grouped with the United States, Yugoslavia and Iran, Germany should be able to move ahead.

They have four newcomers of great potential—left back Linke, midfielders Hammann and Jeremies and Marschall, the top scorer in the Bundesliga.

The revelation of Euro '96 was Oliver | Sammer.

Bierhoff, who continues to score goals gleefully. Hassler still remains a vital force in the midfield and when it comes to an attacking left-sider, Germany have an embarrassment of riches in Christian Ziege and Heinrich who are in equally good form.

Defender Jurgen Kohler still looks as indomitable as ever, but one wonders whether Lethar Matthaeus will be an ideal reput ement as sweeper for the injured Matthias Sammer

21

World Cup record: 13 Finals (1954-1990 as West Germany) -1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994. Best performances: Winners: 1954, 1974, 1990.

ITALY

A the age of 64, the former international Cesare Maldini took over as the national coach of Italy and defeated England at Wembley in only his second match. The Italians immediately hailed him as a new messiah. However, things haven't worked out according to plans. The loss to England 0-2 in Le Tournoi, France was a big psychological blow to the Italians. The only silver lining is that Italy is in a group with the likes of Chile, Cameroon and Austria. So, to qualify for the second round will not be that tough.

Italy managed to scrape through a 0-0 draw in their qualifier

in Poland and were then held goalless by Georgia.

Then they drew against England in Rome, which condemned Italy to the play-offs. A 1-1 draw in Moscow in the snow in the first leg of the play-offs brightened Italy's prospects and they won the return match in Naples 1-0, without making a good impression.

Maldini announced that his team would not play in the same manner in later matches, implying he was unwilling to use two big strikers. So, the superbly skilled Gianfranco Zola and Alessandro Del Piero were inducted into the side.

Del Piero has been dubbed as "Italy's answer to Ronaldo" all season by the press. Like he said the other day: "The fact is that there's been a race between me and Ronaldo all season for the title of 'phenomenon'. What I meant was that inside our stadium, Ronaldo doesn't count for anything." So the duel between him

Italian captain Paolo Maldini in action against Nígeria in USA '94

and Ronaldo is set to continue even during the World Cup.

Del Piero is known for his flair and skill and can compensate for the lack of a great playmaker in the midfield, where Demitrio Albertini is no comparison to past heroes such as Giancarlo Antognoni and Gianni Rivera.

World Cup record: Thirteen previous Finals - 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994. Best performances: Winners 1934, 1938, 1982

ENGLAND

THEY have lost just twice in fourteen matches they have played ever since Glenn Hoddle assumed charge. Those two losses were honourable ones, too, to Italy and Brazil, the World Cup finalists in 1994.

England are one of five or six



Alan Shearer is one of the main pillars in England's attack

favourites to win the trophy, since they are in a very favourable Group G which has Romania, Colombia and Tunisia. The revelation of the '97 Tournoi in France, Paul Scholes and the good performances of Robbie Fowler has given England hope that there is more to the attack than Teddy Sheringham and Alan Shearer. Sadly, Shearer, who is struggling to overcome a serious ankle injury, is still one of the main pillars for England.

Hoddle has been inspiring the team to perform well. There are signs that Rio Ferdinand, the young sweeper from West Ham United could find himself in the squad. This might give more nip to England's attack.

Other members are David Seaman, Tony Adams, Paul Ince, Paul Gascoigne and Shearer, with new talents such as David Beckham, Sol Campbell, Fowler and Michael Owen.

If Shearer regains his fitness, England will have a team with no apparent weaknesses and several strengths. Of course, there is Brazil to fear.

World Cup record: Nine previous Finals- 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1982, 1986, 1990.

Best performance: Winners 1966.

NIGERIA

WHAT a pity that the 1996
Olympic champs Nigeria have been drawn in the "Group of Death."
This is Group D which has Spain,
Bulgaria and Paraguay. If any team can fulfil the prophecy of Walter
Winter-bottom, the former England manager, that an African nation could win the World Cup by the end of the century, it is Nigeria. They have the players, explosive pace, raw power and in depth experience of the European club game —but they also have POLITICS.

The team is hampered by infighting



and intrigues. Politicians interfere constantly in the selection of the team. Despite French coach Phillipe Trousier leading the team to qualification for the World Cup, he was fired. Now Nigeria has hired Yugoslav Bora Milutinovic who was himself sacked by Mexico last November. To top all that, human rights campaigners have called for Nigeria's expulsion because of the policies of the military junta of General Sani Abacha.

Nigeria's skill is not in question. They won the Olympic football title, by stunning Brazil in the final. They have a problem in their star player Nwankwo Kanu, who has just recovered from a career-threatening heart defect, that threatened his playing career.

Other players of distinction include the muscular pair of Emmanuel Amunike and Daniel Amokachi in the attack. Then there are midfielders Jay Jay Okocha and Sunday Oliseh, 22. The latter is so gifted that the defenders have a nightmarish time to stop him moving forward.

World Cup record: One Finals - 1994.
Best performance: Second round.

COLOMBIA

WHEN you think about Colombia, there is one name that comes immediately to mind. And that is of Carlos Valderrama. The veteran, at 36, and the captain, nicknamed the 'Peroxide Gullit', because of his flaming orange hair, still plays with that same old skill, the master of the defence-splitting pass.

At the end of the World Cup qualifying tournament, he had earned 103 caps. He is the only player to have been voted as the South American Footballer Of The Year twice

But the surprising thing is that 16 out of the 22-member squad have played in the '94 USA World Cup. They include Freddy Rincon, Wilmer Cabrera, Adolfo Valencia, Leonel Alvarez, Anthony de Avila etc. They are all over 30. So will they be able to stand up to the rigours of a one month tournament is the question that Colombians themselves are asking.

Wilson Perez, the full-back, who played in all the qualifiers, was recently sentenced to 50 months in prison, convicted of drug trafficking. A recent court ruling prevented him from travelling to France. That has been a big blow to Colombia as he was a tough and efficient full-back.

This is a problem with Colombia as they have had a long connection with the Cali drug cartels. The murder of Andres Escobar in 1994 for scoring an own goal against the USA is still fresh in one's memory. But the good news is that the government has cracked

down hard on the traffickers.

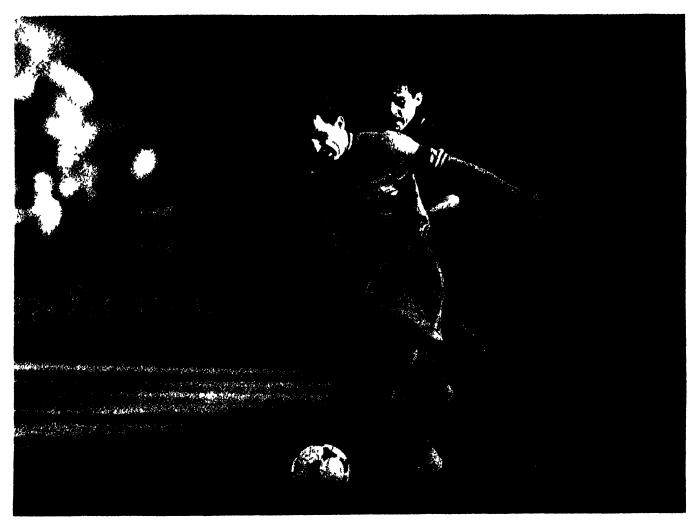
Colombia have another asset in the shape of forward Faustina Asprilla. Nicknamed 'The Octopus' by his countrymen, he baffles his opponents with his stylish dribbling and body feints. He was the highest scorer for Colombia in the qualifying rounds and has a good understanding with Valderrama. As he aptly summed up: "All that we Colombians need to do is just give some space to the superstar (Valderrama) and he will do the rest."

World Cup record: Three previous Finals - 1962, 1990, 1994. Best performance: Second round 1990.

HOLLAND

TOLLAND usually have a slow beginning. But this time, in the qualification series, they romped Holland's midfielder Marc Overmars (left) will be of great help to forward Dennis Bergkamp





home with six wins. They suffered just one defeat and that too, against Turkey. There is tremendous talent in the team.

The first name that comes to mind is Dennis Bergkamp. He has been in good form for Arsenal this season. If he retains his form, then Holland should be able to make an impact at France '98. Along with him, there is midfielder Marc Overmars, also playing for Arsenal, on the wing. But perhaps the most enigmatic player on the team is striker Patrick Kluivert. He plays for AC Milan but has had his reputation tarnished by unsubstantiated accusations of rape. He has not shown the form that made him a teenage prodigy at Ajax.

In defence, there is Frank De Boer. Frank's twin brother Ronald is a midfielder who can play almost anywhere. They also have Aron Winter who is in much-improved

Romania's Gheorghe Haji is being chased by Colombia's Leonel Alvarej in the 1994 edition of the World Cup. Both of them will be seen in action in France

form this season at Internazionale.

But Holland has been their own worst enemies. Now, players of Surinamese origin like Seedorf and Patrick Kluivert complain of discrimination. This has created tensions in the team. The team needs a strong leader and the best man for the post would have been Dennis Bergkamp. But he says that he does not want to be involved. If they can be united, Holland has a good chance to make it to the semi finals, as they are in Group E with Belgium, South Korea and Mexico.

World Cup record: Six previous Finals - 1934, 1938, 1974, 1978, 1990, 1994.

Best performance: Runners-up 1974, 1978.

ROMANIA

NTIL the final fixture of their qualifiers, Romania had not lost a match. Nine matches played, nine victories. No other European side had such a record on the road to France. What ruined it a little was the 1-1 draw against Ireland in Dublin.

Anghel Iordanescu, the Romania coach, was truly happy except when the draw for the World Cup was made He found that Romania was paired alongside England and Colombia in group G.

Lordanescu, 47, appointed in June 1993 has been one of the longest-serving international coaches in Europe. But statistics can be deceptive. Overcoming Ireland, Lithuania, Macedonia, Iceland and Liechtenstein will mean little when you are playing England and Colombia. They can take heart from the fact that they almost made it to the 1994 quarter-finals in the United States.

Gheorghe Hagi, 32, still thrives in his role as the "Maradona of the Carpathians," Dorinel Munteanu with 58 caps is a fine midfielder and forward Adrian Ilie is the great hope of Romanian football. Also likely to make an impact is Denis Serban and Catalin Munteanu, the talented youngsters of Steaua Bucharest.

World Cup record: Six previous Finals - 1930, 1934, 1938, 1970, 1990, 1994.

Best performance; Quarter-finalist 1994.

FRANCE

NE of France's most famous newspaper L'Equipe, prominently displayed a giant headline across its pages prior to the Finals: "In just a few months, we host the World Cup—Wake up!" Yet the country sleeps on and its play has been far from impressive.

However, the French challenge cannot be underestimated. They have a world class defender in Marcel Desailly and midfielders Didier Deschamps and Zinedine Zidane. In the forward line, they have Your Djorkaeff who has played quite well for Inter Milan this season. In fact, France is one of the strongest teams in Europe and should do well in their group which contains South Africa, Denmark and Saudi Arabia.

Their coach Aime Jacquet has had a remarkable run so far. France has only lost twice in 36 games, while they scored a good 70 goals and conceded only 19.

In spite of the big names, the coach's biggest problem is upfront, where there were talks of recalling Jean-Pierre Papin, the 33-year-old Bordeaux striker. But this would have been a step backwards at best.

World Cup record: Nine previous



Didier Deschamps is a world class midfielder who is likely to play a vital role for France

Finals - 1930, 1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1966, 1978, 1982, 1986.

Best performance: Semi-finalists 1958 (3rd) and 1986 (3rd). Qualified automatically 1998.

SPAIN

ANNA have a bet? Spain will win the 1998 World Cup.
Let's see what the bookies have to say. The odds are 20-1. Pitted in a difficult group, Spain have remained unbeaten for more than three seasons including qualifying for the European Championship and the World Cup. For this, coach Javier Clemente should be given the credit. At Euro '96, Spain had the better of the exchanges against hosts England and yet they lost in a penalty shoot-out.

Clemente is a man of complex character. He avoids players of flair, but the discipline and work ethic that he has espoused has completely transformed Spain. They are no longer a happy-go-lucky team that

surrenders under pressure but have become a side that can challenge any European side.

In Euro '96, their main drawback hadbeen in the attack, where the lack of goals had an adverse effect on their intelligent build-up. The vital encounter against England at Wembley was testimony to this. However, Clemente has solved this problem by allowing Raul, the young Real Madrid forward, to play freely.

It is no coincidence that Spain are ranked second in the world by FIFA, behind Brazil, and appear to be Europe's best bet to take the World Cup trophy away from South America. The only question marks has been their fragile temperament, which has undermined previous Spanish campaigns.

Could there be a chance for a new name to be inscribed on the trophy for the first time since 1978?

World Cup record: Nine finals - 1934, 1950, 1962, 1966, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994.

Best performance: Semi-finalist 1950 (4th).

ARGENTINA

Argentina were among the Latin American nations who complained at the long qualifying tournament of 16 ties. That was because they had problems in forming a team from their many European-based internationals. But in the end, it was these stars who helped Argentina qualify for the World Cup.

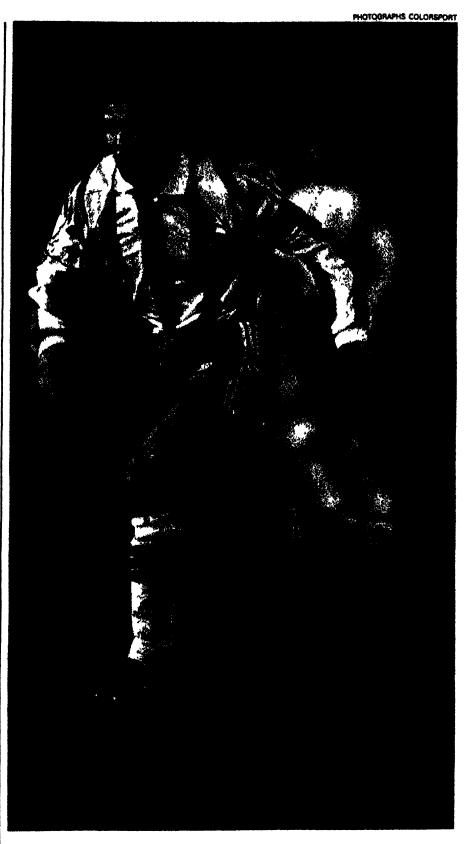
Argentina began shabbily. At one time, it seemed that the team would flounder and miss the bus to France for their 12th appearance in the Finals. However, they rose to the occasion in the latter part of the tournament to win the group with five victories in a row before drawing with Uruguay and Colombia at home in the final games. But by this time, they had already qualified.

Coach Daniel Passarella liasn't yet convinced that he is the best person for the job. He seems to have a vendetta against Gabriel Batistuta. The Fiorentina forward has been a prolific scorer for club and country but he did not play for Argentina for nine months. Then, because of pressure from his Football Federation, Passarella was forced to bring him back. There is no doubt that Batistuta is going to shine for Argentina in the World Cup and he should make a good combination with the talented Hernan Crespo.

Then they have a good defence in players like Roberto Ayala, Nestor Sensini and Fernando Caceres. They also have Chamot, Heman Diaz and Javier Zanetti.

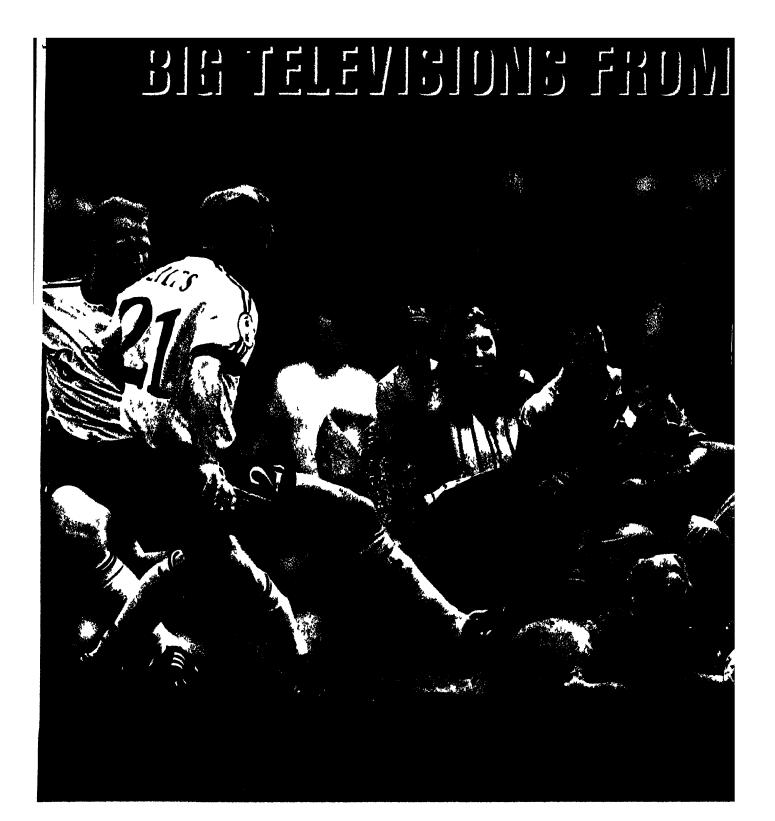
They have outstanding midfielders in Juan Veron, World Cup veteran Diego Simeone and Ariel Ortega (he played all 16 games in the qualifiers) and Marcelo Gallardo.

Argentina's problems are in the front. They have outstanding individual players who can't seem to gel together as a team. They also find it difficult to score goals when they are representing the country. They have



Argentine will bank heavily on World Cup veteran Diego Simeone in France only scored 23 goals in the 16 qualifying matches.

If they want to do well in France '98, they have to get their act together and that means, they have to learn to score more goals.



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World Cup is also Asia's hour of reckoning. Traditionally, the weakest link in world soccer, Asia, for the first and only time in this millennium, will comprise one-eighth of the participating countries with Japan, Iran, South Korea and Saudi Arabia rubbing shoulders with the best in the business.

It is a matter of conjecture how far they will go —only Saudi Arabia among them have won a match in the Finals—but then, in the greater scheme of things, it does not really matter. Being there is just as important for a continent trying to stand up and be counted in the world of soccer.

That the World Cup is serious business for them is evident from the fact that apart from South Korea, all other teams have changed coaches at least once during and after the qualifying campaign. Iran, after the ouster of Tomislav Ivic, have dumped three as have Saudi Arabia.

The Cup means different things to different teams. Japan and South Korea will be looking to notch up their first win—the latter is still searching for one despite four previous appearances—to cement claims of being deserving hosts next time. For Iran, struggling to break the fetters of a cloistered society, the euphoria following the qualification is being interpreted by foreign affairs analysts as a lasting change in sync with the era new President Mohammed Khatami is keen on ushering. And their match

Amrika' (Down with America).
Saudi Arabia will, of course, try to
go one up on their dream debut and be
the second Asian team after North
Korea to make the round of eight.

against the USA on June 21, both are

in the same group, is not only the best

chance either has of a victory but has a

lot of political significance for a nation brought up on a diet of 'Marg Bar

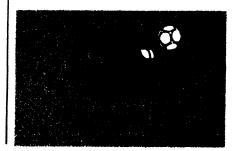
It was in October 1994 that FIFA, at the promptings of its over two-decade-old-chief Joao Havelange, decided to expand the stage for the quadrennial celebration that every World Cup is. From Tunis to Tehran and from Jamaica to Rio-de-Janeiro, it will be the people's business to follow the goings-on in France.

Sixty-eight years ago, due to the pioneering efforts of a diplomat called Jules Rimet, it all got going with 13 teams. That the number has more than doubled—Brian Glanville, soccer's most revered writer, said "It suffers from a kind of elephantiasis"—to 32 is in itself the most fitting tribute to the world game that soccer is.

The Asians' run-up to the World Cup can be a study in contrast. While South Korea and Saudi Arabia did not shed too much sweat to make the cut of 32, topping their respective groups and qualifying for the Finals, Japan and Iran's journey to France was not too dissimilar to the harried

make their World Cup debut but Iraq snatched a late equaliser which gave arch-rivals South Korea a berth among the elite 24. The script, it seemed, was similar this time around too. After a great start, that saw them pump 10 goals past Macau and whip Uzbekistan 6-3, Japan slumped to a 1-2 loss at home against South Korea and then were held 1-1 by Uzbekistan.

It led to coach Shu Kamo being sacked, reportedly because the Prime



THE ASIAN CHALLENGE

JAPAN, IRAN, SOUTH KOREA and SAUDI ARABIA ca

office-goers' desperate but successful lunge on to the footboard of the bus speeding away towards their workplace.

Falling by the wayside, once again, were China who lost their way once Iran came back from a 0-2 deficit to whip them 4-2 at home before Qatar did likewise and beat them 3-1 in Dalian.

Japan's Road To France

In the Land of the Rising Sun, they call it the 'Great denial in Doha.'
Four years ago, Japan looked set to

Minister felt Japan paid dearly against South Korea, after leading by a goal, for being too defensive.

Takeshi Okada was given charge and he brought Verdy Kawasaki's Kitazawa Tsuyoshi to the midfield to give it more edge. Their campaign got a second wind when South Korea were beaten 2-0 by Japan, the goals coming from

Hiroshi Nanami and Brazilian-turned Japanese Wagner Lopes. Second place in Group B was assured, Japan were six points adrift of South Korea's 19 after completing engagements in the five-team group, with a 5-1 thrashing of Uzbekistan.

Passage to France was booked through a golden goal that is replayed



hopes of millions of Asians. Will they be able to make an impact at France '98?

time without number in that country
Down 1-2 vs Iran Japan drew level
forcing play into extra time Then
Nakata Hidetoshi set off on a
trademark run and shot from the top
of the penalty box just before two
Iranians were swooping
to conquer. Goalie
Ahmadraza Abedzadek parried the
shot but the rebound went only as far
as Okano Masayuki who shot home.

On November 16, 1997, 124 years after English sailors introduced the game there and 51 years after they first participated in the Olympics, Japan's prayers were answered in Johor Bharu, Malaysia. Before that red letter day, Japan's biggest achievement was winning the 1968

Olympic bronze—two years later India led by Syed Nayeemuddın beat them to the third place in the Asian Games.

It was German Dettmar Cramer who first contributed to the uplift of Nippon football in the 60s. Japan won the Asian Cup in Hiroshima in 1992 under Dutch manager Marius Johan Ooft. One year and 25 amateur leagues later the glitzy J-League got going—making it the only Asian competition where Gary Lineker, Zico, Salvatore Schilacci have played and Dunga and Mazinho still play—and Japan have not looked back.

Knowing they will not be able to match the rest in stamina and endurance, Japan and South Korea

will rely more on speed and mobility to keep them going Okada, whose squad blends a mixture of youth and experience, prefers the 4-4-2 system with Motohiro Yamaguchi being the pivot at the back of the midfield and Hiroshi Nanami and Hidetoshi Nakata operating on the wings. The attack is likely to be shouldered by 'King Kazu'—Kazuioshi Miura.

Time has not blunted this over-30 footballer's goal-scoring skills. Miura, who has played for Santos (a number of Japanese players are sent to Brazilian clubs to pick up the ropes) and Genoa before returning home to inaugural J-League winners Verdy Kawasaki, has scored 15 goals including six versus Macau and four



against Uzbekistan in 13 qualifiers Skipper and a veteran of over 100 caps Masami Ihara is likely to be the defensive kingpin

Being placed in a group that has Argentina, Jamaica and Croatia (apart from Argentina all are making their debut), Japan may fancy their chances of a second-round berth but any optimism over a match with the Reggae Boyz should be tempered by a recognition of Croatia's potency

Iran's Sporting Revolution

THEY came back from the dead and qualified on the rebound Iran will be in France not because they topped their group in the second round of the Asian qualifiers, nor by virtue of winning either the Asian or the Oceania play-offs but on the away goals rule. They did not win their last six matches on the road to France but

Iran's Syrus Dinmohammadi (left) is chased by A C Roma's Helguera (right) during a friendly match at the Olympic Stadium in Rome

(Inset) Jaial Taledi is the new coach of Iran. He replaced Croat Tomislav Ivic three weeks before the World Cup

then it doesn't matter In a rare departure from precedent, Iran hired a Brazilian Valdır Vierra to guide them to the Final Vierra didn't do wonders but he fostered a sense of team spirit

which the previous coach Md Mayeli Khan failed to do so It was the growing squabble between Khan and the senior players that was responsible for Iran frittering away a world record start to the qualifying campaign—whipping the Maldives 17-0, Karım Bagheri scoring seven They continued in the same vein initially in the second round too, beating China 4-2, Qatar 3-0 and splitting points with Kuwait and South Korea after 1-1 draws But after whipping China 4-1 in Tehran, Iran hit a low Vierra failed to turn things around, Iran losing 0-2 to Qatar but managed to finish second in Group A and set up a play-off with Japan.

Having lost that they took on Australia, holding Terry Venables' Socceroos 1-1 at home and looked to be on their way out when with 14 minutes remaining Iran were 0-2 down in Melbourne. Bitcheri and former Asian Player of the Year Khodadad Azizi had other ideas The duo ended Iran's 20-year wait with almost back-to-back strikes and Australia, who played the Final in



1974 at Iran's expense, were knocked out

Just when Iran was poised to take the big leap into world soccer in the early 80s, their league was banned because Ayatollah Khomeini felt it "was an addictive product of the West" They took a while to reassert themselves as an Asian superpower despite players like Changeeze Khan, Farshad Plous and Sirous Ghiagran Nobody, however, remembered all that when men and women chanted in unison 'Iran! Iran!' and not the usual 'Islam! Islam!' to greet the team when it returned home

In Bagheri and Ali Daei, Iran have one medio and a forward who have between them scored 26 goals in a total of 52 Both play in the Bundesliga with Bagheri, in particular, known for using the entire park and taking prompt long-rangers Two other key players are defenders Mohammed Khakpour, who has played in Turkey and Singapore but is now with Bahman club, and Azizi, who is with FC Cologne. Everyone else plays at

The Iranian World Cup squad Their star player Karim Bagheri (extreme left front row) was the top scorer in the qualifying round

home, mostly with either Bahman or Pirouzi

Being clubbed with the USA, Germany and Yugoslavia, Iran's prospects do not look very bright but no team can take them for granted even if they are up by a brace!

South Korea's Jinx

THOSE in the know of things say every spare plot of land in both North and South Korea is taken up by goalposts Soccer, introduced by British mannes in 1880, is their passion and they partake in it with industry so typical of everything they do. It shows in their fourth successive entry into the Finals—something even England haven't been able to manage—a fifth overall.

A combination of a 14-year-old

professional league and universities' encouragement have thrown up an array of talent, from the legendary Cha Bum-Kun and Choi Soon-Ho to young Ko Jong-So but it hasn't given them a Finals' victory yet

Cha, who has had a decade's experience in the Bundesliga, took over after a disastrous performance in the Asian Championships in 1996 Their run-up to the Final has been smooth, bagging 19 points from eight matches with the only loss coming against Japan but it is the next step that has Cha worried

Their best chance for a win is perhaps against Belgium. Even Mexico is beatable, they think. If that happens, they may even qualify for the second round behind Holland! Cha, who is blending a mixture of young 1996 Olympic players and 1994 veterans, does have quite an arsenal at his disposal. Hong Myung-Bo, a rare Asian who has been selected for a Rest of the World squad, is a veteran of 93 caps and can anchor the defence. Young Jong-So is 19 and the only thing that interests this



medio is football. "Parties, girls and drinks can wait," he is reported to have said. A lot is expected of him and 24-year-old forward Choi Young-So who, after a good showing in the World Youth Cup, is ready for the big league. Defender Lee Ki Hyung has a lot of attacking instincts while Ha Seok-Ju, a left-footed playmaker is likely to be a main cog in Cha's 3-5-2 system.

Desert Magic

The best goal in the history of the Finals. Getting the ball in his own half, he dribbled past almost the entire Belgian team to score. Saeed Oweiran has been known as the 'Desert Maradona' since. Back in favour after being banned for un-Islamic behaviour, Oweiran will be one of the key men on whom coach Carlos Alberto Pareira and Saudi Arabia will have to rely upon as they

attempt to better a dream debut four years ago that saw them make the round of 16 with wins over Morocco and Belgium.

Between 1930-74, Saudi Arabla did not try for a berth. From 1978 to '90 they failed, It is different now.

Pareira is not new to the Saudis or the oil-rich states, nor is he to the World Cup. He was a physio when Brazil won in 1970 and coach when they won again in 1994. He is now in charge and great things are expected.

Football being controlled by the sheikhs, coaches have been changed 19 to a dozen. During this campaign, Portugese Eduard Vingeda was replaced by Otto Pfister, who in turn was supplanted by Pareira because the sheikhs wanted a big name and in keeping with the Gulf states' trend chose a Brazilian.

The players, average age 24, have already been lavished with rewards for qualifying and more will follow for every subsequent achievement.

The men to watch out for are striker Sami Al-Jaber, who often spells

danger from behind like Croat Goran Vlaovic, defenders Abdullah Suleiman and Al Khilawi, medios Khamis Owairan, Khalid Moussad who has well-honed attacking instincts and Al-Muwallid who operates on the left side of the midfield.

Qualifying is just the means to an end for some. For most others, just being there is reason enough to break into a jig. For perennially underachieving pampered players with fat fees and fatter endorsements, the World Cup Final is an opportunity to show their true worth. For those denied a toe-hold in the big-time business that soccer now is, the month-long extravaganza is as good a time as any to get noticed.

As far as the Asian quartet is concerned, it is more of the latter that will serve as motivation. Denied exposure to such high-voltage situations, these teams are likely to choke rather than revel in the pressure.

The recent, rapid strides African soccer has made owes a lot to the



European discipline that helped their natural talents perform to potential. The George Weahs and Nwankwo Kanus would have been lost had they not been recruited by the blue riband leagues in soccer's most lucrative continent. The nuclei of all African

The Saudi Arabian team for France '88

Saudi Arabia's Sayood Al Oweiran (left) fights for the bell with Namibian Monammed Dusch es during a friendly tie



sides this time will be formed by players who ply their trade in Europe Pit that against the fact that three Iranians are Asia's only Cup-bound Europe players and you will understand why while Okada thinks winning one match will be an achievement worth singing paeans about, Nigeria are aiming for a slot in the Final.

Not for nothing does South Africa and Bolton Wanderers player Mark Fish says: "If I was a betting man, I would back Nigeria to get there...People underestimate how much African football has progressed..."

Don't be too surprised if a country emerges out of Africa and on to the top of the world. But then sport thrives on surprises and one from Asia could well be in store.

The bookmakers may rate them as rank outsiders but remember it took two penalties from Linekar to tame Cameroon's Indomitable Lions when everybody thought they would play a cameo-role in Italia 90.



MY LEFT FOOT!

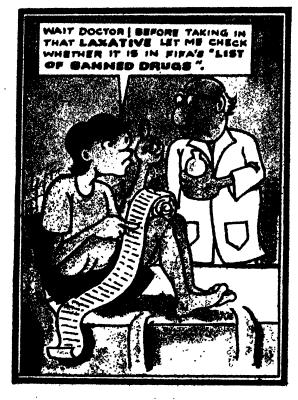
GOPAL SARKAR on the contradictions that make up the World Cup













GOING BACK IN TIME

A brief look at the World Cups down the years

and one pool of four countries were involved in the league with the winner of each pool playing in the knock-out semi-finals, resulting in a total of 18 matches.

France met Mexico in the inaugural match on Sunday, July 13. Laurent struck the first goal on that afternoon at Montevideo. Argentina, Yugoslavia, Uruguay and the United States topped the pools unbeaten and progressed to the last four stage. Argentina beat the USA and Uruguay defeated Yugoslavia and the Final was a replay of the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics title-clash.

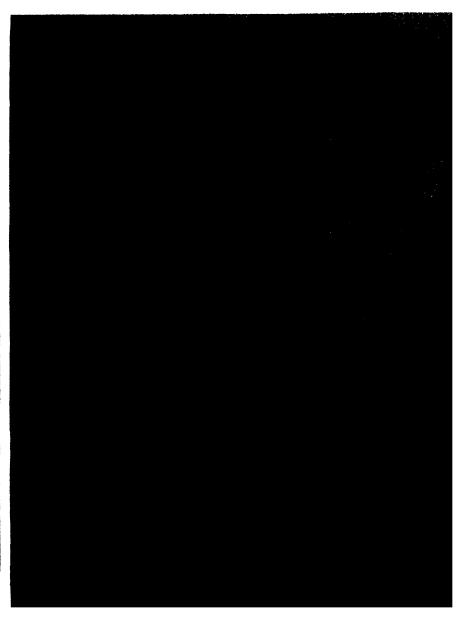
Two different balls were used in the Final, with Argentina earning the right to use their ball for the first half which

BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

URUGUAY 1930

NLY four teams from Europe made the long sea crossing to Uruguay as World Cup soccer got off to a modest start. Not a single European country had entered the fray barely two months before the kick-off. In fact, Sweden had aspired to play the host. But along with Holland, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Austria, Czechoslokavia, Germany, Hungary and Switzerland, it declined en block. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were not eligible as they all had withdrawn from FIFA in 1928 following a disagreement over payments to amateur players. When the South American federations threatened to withdraw from FIFA. France and Belgium agreed to participate. This was thanks to pressure from Jules Rimet and R.W. Seeldrayers who were then the president and vice-president of FIFA respectively. Yugoslavia also entered the fray and so did Romania on instructions of their ruler King Carol, who even selected the team.

So there was no qualifying competition. And 13 teams competed. Three pools of three countries each



they led by an odd goal in three, Carlos Peucelle and Guillermo Stabile scoring for them. However, the Uruguayan ball used in the second half turned the match in their favour. Goals from Pedro Cea, Santos Iriarte and Hector Castro ensured that 50,000 franc Jules Rimet Trophy belonged to the hosts.

A national holiday was declared the following day in Uruguay, while reports of biased refereeing and brutal play provoked an angry mob in the Argentinian capital Buenos Aires to attack the Uruguyan Consulate. The police had to open fire to disperse the crowd.

Final result: Uruguay beat Argentina 4-2. Winning captain: Jose Nasazzi. Winning manager: Odino Viera. Final referee: John Langenus of Belgium. Total attendance:4,34,500. Total goals:70. Highest goal-getter: Guillermo Stabile (Argentina) 8 from 4 matches.

ITALY: 1934

HE spectre of Italian fascism overshadowed the second edition of the World Cup which was allotted to Italy by the 1932 FIFA Congress. Defending champions Uruguay complimented the European snub given to them in the first World Cup. Italy competing in the qualifying tournament to reduce the 32-team field into half was ridiculous. Needless to mention, the organising committee heaved a big sigh of relief when the

hosts qualified for the tournament proper by beating Greece.

Turkey and Chile withdrew without taking part in the qualifying rounds, while Mexico travelled all the way to Rome only to return home immediately after losing to the USA in the qualifier.

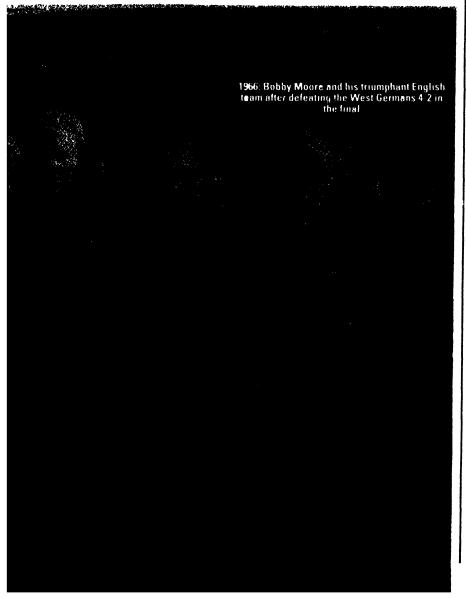
Instead of the pool system followed in the first edition, the Finals were held on a knockout basis and the defeat in the first round for Argentina, Brazil and the USA meant that they had travelled halfway around the world to play a single match. The reason behind Argentina's 2-3 loss to Sweden in the first round was due to not playing their full strength. The rich Italian clubs had absorbed most of the Argentinians who played in the '30 World Cup.

Brazil went down 3-1 to Spain in Genoa, and only the European countries moved into the last eight stage. Italy won the replay against Spain by a solitary goal after a 1-1 draw earlier. Austria downed Hungary 2-1. Czechoslovakia won a chriller against a tough Switzerland team by an odd goal, and Germany defeated Sweden 2-1 in the other match.

Austria started as favourites in the semis but Italy provided an upset result, winning by winger Guaita's lone goal. Czechoslovakia earned the other final slot beating Germany 3-1. The first-ever third-place match saw Germany beating Austria 3-2.

In the Final at Rome, unfancied Czechs silenced the fiercely partisan crowd with a 70th minute goal from Puc. However, Raimondi Orsi equalised with a freak shot that curled into the net and took the match into extra-time. (Orsi attempted 20 times, without success and the opposing goalkeeper, to repeat that shot for the sake of journalists the following day). Eventually, the Fascist leader Mussolini got a major propaganda victory when Schiavia shot a 97th minute goal for Italy who managed to stave off a strong Czech pressure.

Final result: Italy beat Czechoslovakia 2-1 (extra-time). Winning captain Giampiero Combi.



Winning manager: Vittorio Pozzo. Final referee: Ivan Eklind of Sweden. Total attendance: 3,95,000. Total goals: 70. Highest goal-getter: Angelo Schiavio (Italy) and Oldrich Nejedly (Czechoslovakia) and Edmund Conen (Germany) 4 from 4 matches.

FRANCE: 1938

LAYED against the backdrop of the Second World War clouds that had gathered throughout Europe, the third World Cup Finals saw Italy deservingly retaining the Cup with a 4-2 win over Hungary in the June 19 Final in Paris. And they held the trophy for the next 12 years as there was no competition due to war. Uruguay were absent once again. Spain was unable to compete due to Civil War. Argentina refused to take part in protest after their bid to play host was rejected.

Hitler's Anschluss—the political union of Germany and Austria—enabled the former to draft the best Austrian players into their roster, while England refused FIFA's offer to replace Austria. So from the preliminary 36 entries after Colombia, Costa Rica, Dutch Guinea, El Salvador, Japan, Mexico, Spain and the USA withdrew without participating, the field for the final series was reduced to 15, contesting in 18 matches.

Though Germany had strengthened their squad with Austrian players, a 1-all draw against Switzerland in Paris shocked them, and the replay provided them a bigger jolt when Switzerland shrugged off a 0-2 half time deficit to win 4-2. While Italy won their opener against Norway with centre forward Piola getting the match-winner, Brazil served notice of their splendid soccer pipping Poland 6-5. France downed Belgium 3-1, Czechoslovakia blanked Holland by three goals, Hungary made a mockery of the Dutch East Indies 6-0 and the Cubans who substituted for Mexico, provided the shock result of the round winning the replay 2-1, after an exciting 3-all draw against a gallant Romania.



fielded different players to beat Czechoslovakia, who changed sıx in their line-up.

Brazil eventually had to settle for the third place with a 4-2 win against Sweden after losing their semi-finals to Italy when they rested star players Leonidas and Tim. Hungary rallied to beat Sweden 5-1 in the other semis, with Svengeller getting a hat-trick.

Final result: Italy beat Hungary 4-2. Winning captain: Guiseppe Meazza. Winning Manager: Vittorio Pozzo. Final referee: Georges Capdeville of France. Total attendance. 4,83,000 Total goals: 84. Highest goal-getter: Da Silva Leonidas (Brazil) 8 from 4 matches.

BRAZIL: 1950

N resumption after a gap of 12 years due to the World War II, Brazil served as the perfect venue of the fourth edition, which had only 13 teams in the final series contesting 22 matches. There were 34 entries for the prelims while Austria, Belgium, Burma, India, Indonesia and Phillipines withdrew without

participating. The Home Countries rejoined FIFA and England took part for the first time. Scotland refused to go to Brazil as runners-up in the British Home International Championship, the qualifying competition, which England had won. Argentina, at loggerheads with Brazil, skipped as they had done in 1938, while Czechoslovakia, hit by the war, pulled out. So did France and Turkey after qualifying. Portugal refused to replace Scotland and the format was ludicrous with two groups of four countries, one of three and one of only two leading to a final pool of four teams.

Brazil, playing five of their six matches in Rio de Janerio, qualified from pool I, beating Mexico and Yugoslavia and drawing with Switzerland.

Spain topped pool II with an all-win record against the USA, Chile and England. Gaetjen's 37th minute strike for underdogs USA against the latter provided the biggest upset of this edition, as England with players such as Alf Ramsay in its ranks were tipped to win the title.

Italy had lost their superb Torino

team in the Superga air crash the previous year, and an understrength defending champions finished second to Sweden in pool III.

Uruguay, who had only Bolivia in pool IV, humbled them 8-0 with Sciaffino striking four times.

On July 16, at Rio's Maracana Stadium Brazil needed a draw against Uruguay in the final pool decider, often reffered to as the 'fourth World Cup Final.' Brazil had the advantage of prevailing on a better goal difference with thumping wins of 7-1 over Sweden, and a 6-1 against Spain, while Uruguay had drawn 2-all with Spain and edged Sweden 3-2. But Uruguay went on to win the Cup for the second time in as many attempts with goals from Schiaffino and speedy winger Ghiggia clinching the issue for them. Interestingly, this was after the Rio state governor had declared Brazil as "peerless masters of the world" in front of a record 1,99,850 ebullient crowd.

Final result: Uruguay beat Brazil 2-1. Winning Captain: Obdulio Varela. Winning manager: Colonel Volpe. Decider referee: George Reader of England. Total attendance: 13,37,000. Total goals 88. Highest goal-getter: Marques Ademir (Brazil) 7 from 6 matches

SWITZERLAND: 1954

POOR organisation marked the fifth edition which also saw some ugly incidents besides plenty of goals. Scotland, runners-up again in the British Home International Championship agreed to take part. The qualifying competition had 38 entries and Chile withdrew without participating. The 16 teams for the final series engaged in 26 matches, each producing on an average 5.38 goals, the highest goals per match in any World Cup Finals.

Each of the 16 teams needed to play only two matches although they were grouped in four pools of four teams each. The top two in each group took part in a knockout competition.

Brazil and Yugoslavia qualified from group I, Uruguay and Austria



from group III. Hungary, who combined the Latin American rhythm with the European style of dour defence, blasted 17 goals in their first two matches—a 9-0 win against South Korea and a 8-3 win over West Germany—to top group II where

West Germany finished second thrashing Turkey 7-2 in the play-off. England topped the last group while Switzerland finished second beating Italy 4-1 in the play off.

The quarter-finals included the "Battle of Berne" involving Hungary and Brazil. The favourites survived a dreadful brawling clash that saw three players sent off and a dressing room free-for-all after the match. The brilliant Hungarian left striker Puskas, who was severely injured by a West German foul in the final round, watched his team score a 4-2 win from the sidelines and later was accused of hitting the Brazilian centre half Pinheiro in the face with a bottle.

The last eight stage also recorded the highest aggregate score in World Cup Finals—Austria 7, Switzerland 5. And poor goalkeeping by Gil Merrick caused England's ouster as Uruguay won 4-2 to move into the semis while West Germany downed Yugoslavia 2-0.

In a classic semi-final Uruguay went down to Hungary 2-4 in extra time and the fancied Austria lost to West Germany 1-6 thanks to their shaky custodian Walter Zeman.

Having beaten West Germany earlier, Hungary were the best bet to bag the title and they did play Puskas, though he had not yet recovered from his injury. Puskas and Czibor put Hungary 2-0 up in the first eight minutes but goals from Morlock and Hulmut Rahn (two) upset the calculations of the Magical Magyars who were destined never to win the Cup. It was their first defeat in 33 games, a triumphant spell that had lasted for four years.

Final result: West Germany beat Hungary 3-2. Winning captain: Fritz Walter. Winning manager: Sepp Herberger. Final referee: Bill Ling of England. Total attendance: 9,43,000. Tota goals: 140. Highest goal-getter: Sandor Kocsis (Hungary) 11 from 5 matches.

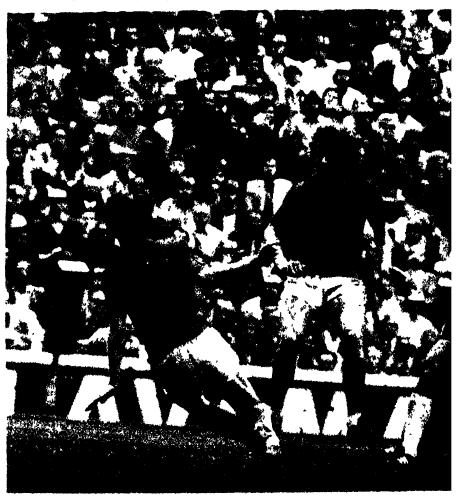
SWEDEN: 1958

THE balance of power shifted from L Europe to South America with the emergence of a soccer genius called Pele in the sixth World Cup. Pele scored the 65th minute winner as Brazil scraped past Wales in the quarter-finals and then came up with a superb hat-trick in the second half to seal France's fate in the semi-finals. In the final at Stockholm on June 29, witnessed by 49,737 spectators, the hosts went ahead by a stunning fourth minute goal through Nils Liedholm, before Brazil answered with one of the most magnificent displays ever seen in a World Cup final.

Winger Garrincha fashioned two first half goals for Vava. Ten minutes into the second half, Pele exhibited his breathtaking skill taking a high ball on his thigh in the thick of the penalty box and volleyed into the Swedish goal hooking the ball over his head and spinning round. Zagalo added a fourth goal in the 77th minute and though Simonsson pulled one back, Pele's superb header following a Zagalo centre made the final score read 5-2. Brazil thus had become the one and only team to win outside their own continent, from among 51 entries.

In fact, Turkey and Cyprus withdrew without participating and there were 16 teams in the final series competing in 35 matches. All the four Home Countries—England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales qualified for the final series. While the first three did it on merit, Wales did it with a bit of luck.

Uruguay refused to play Israel for a 1974: Gerd Muller scores the winning goal for West Germany against Holland in the Final. (Inset) Franz Beckenbaeur, the German captain with the first FIFA World Cup



final place after being eliminated in the preliminary group. Wales, who had finished second to Czechoslovakia in Europe group 4,



got this opportunity to play Israel which was the lone team left in the Afro-Asian group final following the withdrawal of all qualifiers—Indonesia, Egypt and Sudan. Wales blanked Israel by two goals, both at home and away ties, to make the Finals where former champions Italy, who were unexpectedly eliminated by a gritty Northern Ireland was the other notable absentee.

West Germany and Northern Ireland (beating Czechoslovakia in a play-off), France and Yugoslavia, Sweden and Wales (defeating Hungary in a play-off), Brazil and USSR (winning the play-off against England) entered the last eight as the top two from the four pools. Play-offs were used to decide the second place if there was a tie on points. The previous Cup finalists Hungary—without Puskas, Kocsis and Czibor who had not returned to their country after a 1956 revolt against the ruling power-were an ordinary side, while Argentina invited rubbish and rotten fruit on their return to Buenos Aires after losing shabbily to Czechoslovakia 1-6. And Brazil gave the world the first taste of the Samba magic.

Final result: Brazil beat Sweden 5-2. Winning captain: Hilderaldo Bellini. Winning manager: Vicente Feola. Final referee: Maurice Guige of France. Total attendance: 8,68,000. Total goals: 126. Highest goal-getter: Just Fontaine (France) 13 from 6 matches.

CHILE: 1962

HILE was devastated by a severe earthquake in 1960 and their football association president Carlos Dittborn pleaded to FIFA, "we must have the World Cup because we have nothing else." Dittborn's determination made FIFA grant the seventh edition to Chile.

Unfortunately, Dittborn died of a heart attack just before the kick-off and his two young sons raised the flags of Chile and Switzerland to signal the start of the opening match at Santiago

after a minute's silence was observed.

Austria, Canada and Indonesia withdrew without participating and of the 56 entries, 16 made it to the final series, England being the only Home Country. Scotland were unlucky to lose the play-off at Belgium to the eventual finalists Czechoslovakia. As in the previous edition, the format remained the same, except that the goal difference was used to determine the group qualifiers instead of the play-offs.

Though it was remarkable on the part of Chile to host the final series, sadly it was more remembered for defensive and often violent play. The Chile-Italy match assumed great notoriety in the "Battle of Santiago" Leonel Sanchez, son of a pro boxer, broke Italian Umberto Maschio's nose with a flawless lefthook which went unnoticed by English referee Ken Aston and his two linesmen, Goldstein of the USA and Elcaz of Mexico, but was witnessed by millions on television.

Unjustified criticism of Chile by two Italian journalists was the cause for creating bad blood and Italy's Ferrini, sent off after kicking Landa, refused to leave the pitch until he was escorted off by the police eight minutes later. FIFA slapped a one-match ban on Ferrini and issued warnings to Sanchez and Mario David, who kicked Sanchez in the neck as they clashed for the ball.

For the third consecutive Finals, West Germany met Yugoslavia in the quarter-finals and were shocked by Radkovic's 85th minute goal. Chile downed USSR and touchingly dedicated their win to the newborn son of the late Dittborn, whose wife had given birth on the morning of the match. Brazil triumphed 3-1 over England and Czechoslovkia beat Hungary by a lone goal.

Crowd figures were contrasting in the semi-finals with 76,594 watching Brazil defeat the hosts 4-2, and 5,890 were witness to Czechoslovakia's 3-1 drubbing of Yugoslavia. Garrincha scoring the first two goals for Brazil before kicking Rojas, to receive the marching orders and getting hit on the



head by a bottle as he was entering the dressing room.

Brazil retained the title despite an injured Pele not playing the Final.

Final result: Brazil beat Czechoslovakia 3-1. Winning captain: Ramos De Oliviera Mauro. Winning manager: Aymore Moreira. Final referee: Nikolai Latychev of the USSR. Total attendance:7,76,000. Total goals:89. Highest goal-getter: Drazen Jerkovic of Yugoslavia, 5 from 6 matches.

1978: Daniel Passarella the Argentine captain with the Cup after they defeated Holland in the

ENGLAND: 1966

NE of the most controversial World Cup Finals, the eighth edition saw Geoff Hurst becoming the first to score a hat-trick in a title-clash. The hosts, the lone Home Country to take part, went on to win the Cup beating Germany 4-2. But the

Germans claimed that Hurst's second goal never crossed the line after hitting the bar. Referee Georg Dienst of Switzerland and Russian linesman Bakhramov thought otherwise.

The format remained the same as in Chile four years before and coincidentally the total number of goals scored was also the same. While the preliminary rounds witnessed 70 entries, surprisingly, North Korea representing Asia and Australasia beat Australia 6-1 and 3-1 at home and away respectively. South Korea, South Africa, Ghana, Guinea, Sudan, Cameroon, Tunisia, Algeria, Liberia, Morocco, Senegal, Ethiopia, Gabon, United Arab Republic, Libya and Nigeria all withdrew without taking part.

England and Uruguay from group I, West Germany and Argentina from group II, Portugal and Hungary from group III, and USSR and North Korea from group IV made the quarter-finals, the surprise in the league being the ouster of holders Brazil from group III.

Against an unglamorous Bulgarian outfit, Brazil's game at Goodison Park with 5,000 Brazilian fans among the 47,308 crowd, turned out to be violent. Brazil won that game 2-0 with goals from Pele and Garrincha, but lost their first World Cup match since 1954 when they played Hungary next, going down 1-3 without the injured Pele. Morais' vicious foul on Pele which reduced the genius to a limping passenger later on highlighted Portugal's 3-1 win over the defending champions. And Brazil returned home criticising European refereeing for allowing over-physical tactics on their stars.

In group IV, North Korea provided the biggest jolt scoring through Pak Doo Ik to oust Italy, who rested seven players. Fans armed with rotten tomatoes greeted the Italians back home. An even bigger upset seemed likely when North Korea led Portugal 3-0 before succumbing to star player Eusebio's four-goal onslaught.

England's quarter-final with Argentina revealed the sordid depths to which the latter had slumped while West Germany reached the final winning an unarmed battle against USSR, with Lev Yashin under the bar showing outstanding sportsmanship. And England also beat Portugal by an identical 2-1 margin in the other semis to set up an epic extra-time final.

Final result: England beat West Germany 4-2. Winning captain: Bobby Moore Winning Manager: Alf Ramsey. Final referee: George Dienst of Switzerland. Total attendance: 16,14,677. Total goals: 89. Highest goal-getter: Ferreira Eusebio (Portugal) 9 from 6 matches. and El Salvador provoked a war that cost 3,000 lives. The format for the 16 teams in the Final series involving 32 matches remained the same as the previous edition. But for the first time, substitutes were allowed.

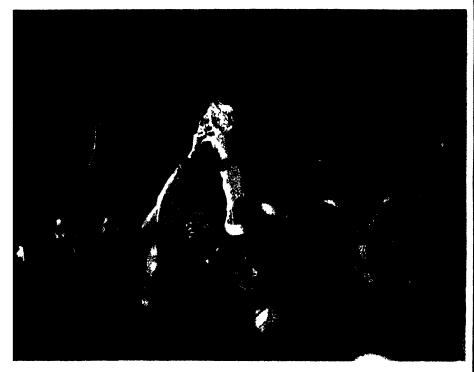
USSR, Mexico, Italy, Uruguay, Brazil, England, West Germany and Peru made it to the quarter-finals while the World Cup's most ridiculous refereeing error was witnessed during the Mexico-El Salvador tie. Egyptian referee Aly Kandil awarded a goal to Mexico, scored by Valdivia following a free kick which was supposed to have

Brazilian supporters honked their car horns while chanting 'Brazil' throughout the night driving around the Guadalajara Hilton Hotel. England lost 1-0, a Tostao-Pele-Jairzinho move forcing them to play their quarter-finals against West Germany. England's finest goalkeeper Gordon Banks made one of the most memorable saves in this match when he dived and twisted to scoop a superb Pele header off a Jairzinho cross.

The English hopes of retaining the Cup died when they squandered a 2-0 lead over West Germany in the quarter-finals, losing 2-3 in extra time, Gordon Banks' absence on health grounds proving dear.
Uruguay beat USSR, Italy overcame Mexico, and Brazil defeated Peru to make the semis.

Italy had the last laugh in a great semi-final against West Germany who took the match into extra-time. But Brazil, a 3-1 winner over Uruguay in the other semis, over-ran Italy to achieve the first World Cup hat-trick, while Jairzinho established a record by scoring in every match. For their third win Brazil were presented with the Jules Rimet trophy for keeps. Sadly, it has since been stolen.

Final result: Brazil beat Italy 4-1. Winning captain: Carlos Alberto. Winning manager: Mario Zagalo. Final referee: Rudi Glockner of East Germany. Total attendance: 16,73,975. Total goals: 95. Highest goal-getter: Gerd Muller (West Germany) 10 from 6 matches.



MEXICO: 1970

RGENTINA was expected to host the ninth edition. But a poor economy and their erratic support in the past to FIFA went against them. And Mexico held matches at high altitudes in the midday heat, which sometimes hit 100 degree F, to suit a worldwide television coverage.

Of the initial 71 entries, only England, as defending champions, qualified among the Home Countries while the other notable absentees were Argentina, Austria, France, Hungary and Yugoslavia. A qualifying match involving enemies Honduras

1962: Dino Zoff the Italian captain with the trophy after Italy defeated West Germany 3-1 in the Final

been taken by an El Salvador player.

Sweden needed two clear goals against Uruguay in order to make it to the last eight. But before the game began rumours spread of attempted bribery of the appointed referee De Moraes of Brazil, forcing his replacement. Uruguay played under protest thinking this to be a formal accusation of them, but won the match through Grahn's last-gasp goal.

The Englishmen could not sleep on the eve of their group III match against Brazil. Reason; some hostile and noisy

WEST GERMANY: 1974

EST GERMANY had won the 1972 European
Championship with Total Football, a hard-running and inter-changing brand of football. They were lucky to win the new FIFA World Cup trophy for the first time against Holland, the best team in the tournament, with this novel and exciting brand of soccer which did away the conventional notions of position play.

The July 7 final between Europe's two best teams which attracted

77,833 fans got off to a sensational start. From the kick-off the Dutch put together a string of 15 passes that ended with Cruyff being brought down in the penalty box by Hoeness. Neeskens fired the first-ever penalty in a Cup final, awarded by referee Jack Taylor, past a diving custodian Sepp Maier and the hosts were a goal down before any of their players had even touched the ball. The ball was on the penalty spot 25 minutes later when Jensen tripped Holzenbein and Breitner made no mistake to level the score. Maier's fine work under the

1986: Diego Maradona's crowning glory. With the World Cup after defeating West Germany 3-2 in the Final

German goal ensured them the Cup after Gerd Muller made it 2-1 two minutes from half-time.

There was a change in the format with the quarter-finals and semi-finals removed. Of the 95 entries. 16 for the final series were divided into four groups of four each. The top two in each group moved two second round groups of 4 nations each. The winners of the two second round groups played for the Cup and the runners-up fought for the third-place.

For the first time since rejoining FIFA after the second World War. England failed to qualify playing a 1-1 draw with Poland when they badly

required a win. Scotland, making the finals for the first time since 1958, was the only Home Country among the top 16. After a goalless draw in Moscow, USSR refused to play a return match against Chile at Santiago, where a number of political prisoners had been evacuated following a military coup. Chile qualified as FIFA's handling of the situation left a lot to be desired.

Australia fielded a team of immigrants under the Yugoslav manager Rale Rasic and became the first Oceanian country, Zaire the first Central African country and Haiti made their first appearance representing Central and North America in the Finals, for which there was extensive security against the backdrop of Israeli athletes massacred at the Munich Olympics two years earlier. Sanon's goal for Haiti ended Italian goalkeeper Dino Zoff's 1,150 minutes of international soccer's "trustworthy record". Italy, however, won 3-1. But a dope test on the Haitian centre-half Ernst Jean-Joseph the following day proved positive and he was barred from further participation. The Haitian officials dragged him out of the team's quarters, beat him up and held him in solitary confinement before flying him back to

Final result: West Germany beat Holland 2-1. Winning captain: Franz Beckenbauer. Winning manager: Helmut Shoen. Final referee: Jack Taylor of England. Total attendance: 17,74,022. Total goals: 97. Highest goal-getter: Grzegorz Lato (Poland) 7 from 7 matches.

ARGENTINA: 1978

HE number of entries (103) crossed the three-figure mark for the first time despite Argentina getting to host the World Cup Finals at last amidst protests from most of the countries. Franz Beckenbauer and Johann Cruyff were among the several other leading players who refused to participate in a country where several thousand people had



been either murdered and tortured or disappeared in the two years since dictator General Jorge Videla and his military Junta had seized power.

The violent nature of Argentinians was on display many times before and during the tournament. The leader of the new body called the Ente Autarquico Mundial (EAM), set up to speed up the reconstruction work of the stadiums, was killed when he was about to attend the first press meet of EAM. Shortly before the tournament kicked off, a bomb killed a policeman at the Buenos Aires press centre.

As in the previous edition the format remained the same and Scotland, the lone representative from Britain, went out on goal difference making way for Peru and Holland from group IV into the second round. Other qualifiers included Italy and Argentina, Poland and West Germany, Austria and Brazil from the first three groups.

The second round groups, strangely, had European teams in group A and the three South American countries plus Poland in the other. The Dutch had no problem reaching the final having two wins from three matches while Argentina's qualification was shrouded in controversy. Having beaten Poland and having drawn with Brazil, the hosts were allowed to kick-off after Brazil had beaten Poland 3-1 in the last matches. Thus they knew exactly what the target was for them in order to qualify for the final -- a 4-0 margin against Peru. And they won 6-0 to play the final in front of a 77,260 partisan crowd.

A fierce clash on June 25 went into extra time with the regulation time score reading 1-all, and Rensenbrink plasting a shot against the post in the ast minute. Argentina took control of the proceedings when it mattered the most. Goals from Kempes and Bertoni paved the way for ecstatic celebrations.

Final result: Argentina beat Holland extra time). Winning captain: Daniel Passarella. Winning manager: Cesar uis Menotti. Final referee: Sergio Gonella of Italy. Total attendance: 16,10,215. Total goals: 102. Highest



1990: Lother Mattheeus and his workeholic Germans succeeded in winning the trophy after upsetting the Argentinians in the Final

goal-getter: Mario Kempes (Argentina) 6 from 7 matches.

SPAIN: 1982

HANA, Uganda, Lebanon and Iran withdrew while from 109 entries reduced to 24 in the final series which necessitated 52 matches -eight teams and 14 matches more than the previous edition. Italy became the first European country to win the World Cup three times. Italy provided some of the best football in the tournament while topping Group C, Paolo Rossi's brilliant hat-trick sealing Brazil's fate in a 3-2 win, following an undistinguished 2-1 victory over Argentina with Maradona kicked out of the game. Italy blanked Poland by two goals with Rossi scoring in each half to put his team in the final, where Cabrini became the first player to miss a penalty kick. In front of a 90,089 crowd, Italy scored through Rossi (56th minute), Tardelli (68th) and Altobelli (80th) while West Germany, winners in the first-ever penalty shootout beating France 5-4 in the semi-finals, pulled one back through Breitner eight minutes before the close.

The competition was divided into six first round groups of four countries with the top two entering four second round groups of three countries. Each second round group winner entered the knock-out semi-finals. Despite losing to Romania, Norway, Switzerland, England made it from the European group IV. Except Wales, who failed to beat Iceland at home, the Home countries were well represented. New Zealand travelled more than 50,000 miles to play the 15 qualifying games and made it to the Finals for the first time. So did Honduras, Algeria and Cameroon while Holland was a notable absentee.

Poland, Italy (from group I), West Germany, Austria (group II);
Belgium, Argentina (group III),
England, France (group IV), Northern Ireland, Spain (group V) and Brazil,
USSR (group VI) entered the second round. Besides Italy, Poland (from group A), West Germany (group B),
France (group D) qualified for the semi-finals, from the second round.

Some of the highlights of the first two rounds: Argentina, with their new hope in Maradona, becoming only the second holders to lose their opening match to Belgium; Hungary chalking up a 11-0 win over El Salvador—the highest Cup score to date; Algeria provided the biggest shock defeating West Germany

through Madjer and Belloumi goals; England's Bryan Robson scoring the fastest goal in Cup history 27 seconds into their match against France; West Germany and Austria playing their last first round match knowing that a 1-0 win for the former would ensure both entering the second round at the expense of Algeria (the Germans won 1-0 amidst protests, demonstrations and allegations), and the Kuwait team's walkout in the middle of a defeat at the hands of France who scored a fourth goal after the Kuwaitis had stopped playing on hearing a whistle being blown in the crowd.

Final result: Italy beat West Germany 3-1. Winning captain: Dino Zoff. Winning manager: Enzo Bearzot. Final referee: Arnaldo Cesar Coelho of Brazil. Total attendance: 17,66,277. Total goals: 146. Highest goal-getter: Paolo Rossi (Italy) 6 from 7 matches.

MEXICO: 1986

DIEGO MARADONA, technically and temperamentally a better player than four years ago, gave indications of better things to follow as Argentina started their campaign with a 3-1 win over South Korea. And he went on to dominate the 13th edition which is more remembered for his famous "Hand of God" goal though he did score four other legitimate goals—three of them brilliantly.

England met Argentina for the first time since the Falklands War and the match provided evidence of the contrasting sides of Maradona. He scored first chasing a sliced back-pass by Steve Hodge and clearly fisting the ball into the net. "If there was a hand involved, it was the hand of God," Maradona said later, while such notorious refereeing decisions littered the tournament. However, Maradona's second goal showed him at the pinaccle of his talent as he tore the English defence apart to score. Maradona scored a brace again in the semi-finals against Belgium, 5-4 penalty shootout winners over Spain in the quarter-finals.



1994: Brazilian captain Dunga (with Ronaldo on his left) does a lap of honour after defeating Italy on penalties in the Final

When West Germany entered their second successive final by blanking France by two goals, the June 29 title-clash was a classic between Europe and South America, watched by a crowd of 1,14,800. Goals from Luis Brown and Valdano appeared to have given Argentina a comfortable win, but the Germans staged a stupendous comeback scoring through Rummenigge and Voeller in the last 15 minutes. Extra-time was beckoning until the 85th minute when a Maradona pass put Burruchaga through to score and Argentina lifted the Cup for the There was a second time. change in the format with the top two from each of the six first round groups of four countries each, plus the four best third-placed teams progressing to the knockout second round followed by quarter-finals, semi-finals and final. And penalty shootouts after a stalemate in extra time and regulation period was introduced. Three of the four quarter-finals was decided by spot-kicks.

Final result: Argentina beat West Germany 3-2. Winning captain: Diego Maradona. Winning manager: Carlos Bilardo. Final referee: Romualdo Arrpi Filho of Brazil. Total attendance: 22,85,498. Total goals: 1.32 per match. Highest goal-getter: Gary Linekar (England) 6 from 5 matches.

ITALY: 1990

F the 110 entries, Bahrain, India, Rwanda, Togo and Yemen withdrew without taking part in the qualifying competition, while West Germany won the first-ever repeat final with Brehme converting the penalty as Argentina displayed negative soccer to become unpopular. Italy became the second country to host the Finals twice and there was no change in the format. England, Scotland, Republic of Ireland (coached by the 1966 English star Jack

Charlton) represented the Home Countries. Cameroon and Egypt represented Africa (the latter doing so after a gap of 56 years) while the South American qualifying rounds were hit by controversy.

Brazil, en route to maintaining their cent per cent attendance in the Cup Finals, were involved in an abandoned match with Chile. A crowd of 1,41,072 gathered at Rio on September 3, 1989 when a flare thrown on to the pitch by a spectator disrupted the match. Brazil were ahead by two goals then, and the Chile custodian's actions as he crashed to the ground claiming to have been blinded by the explosion resulted in the match getting abandoned. Investigations through television replays revealed that Roberto Rojas did it in an attempt to get Brazil disqualified. FIFA rightly banned Chile from international competition, Rojas was given a life ban and Brazil were awarded the tie.

The inaugural tie produced one of the all-time upset results when the indomitable lions Cameroon scored a 1-0 win over holders Argentina with Francois Biyick recording an unexpected header after a goalless first half. Cameroon proved that their earlier win was no fluke by defeating Romania to top the group. Their hero was the 38-year-old Roger Milla, who struck a brace against Colombia, to make Cameroon the first-ever African nation to reach the quarter-finals of the World Cup finals.

In the second round, Skuhravy notched up a hat-trick in the Czech's 4-1 win over Costa Rica, Brazil lost to Caniggia's solitary goal for Argentina, West Germany beat Holland by an odd goal in three with Klinsmann and Brehme finding the mark, but not before Holland's Rijkaard spat on rival Voeller's face with both getting the marching orders.

Schillaci scored the winner as Italy overcame the Republic of Ireland's challenge to enter the semi-finals, Argentina won 3-2 on penalties against Yugoslavia, West Germany progressed through skipper Matthaus' penalty conversion, and

England were lucky to score a 3-2 win over a lively Cameroon. Argentina won on spot kicks against Italy, and West Germany also won in a similar fashion to enter the final though England dominated the proceedings.

Final result: West Germany beat Argentina 1-0. Winning Captain: Lothar Matthaeus. Winning manager: Franz Beckenbauer. Final referee: Edgardo Codesal Mendez of Mexico. Total attendance: 25,12,900. Total goals: 115. Highest goal-getter: Salvatore Schillaci 6 from 7 matches.

USA 1994

Soccer in America—where basketball, baseball and American-style football are more popular—never had a widespread appeal. Morocco was USA's biggest rival bidder and an African nation is yet to organise a World Cup finals since its inception. But the USA got the nod to stage the final series. Prior to that a new record of 144 countries took part in the qualifying stage. Yugoslavia, where civil war raged with Bosnia, did not take part while South Africa was back in the FIFA fold after a long time.

Among those who missed the 'Finals bus' to USA were England, European champions two years back, Denmark, Portugal, Poland, and France, who were knocked out by a Bulgarian goal. Over a month of scorching heat, the World Cup was played in front of a record number of spectators.

A win was worth three points in the first round. USA and Saudi Arabia sprang a few surprises while entering the last 16. Saudi Arabia, who each received \$25,000 and a Mercedes car for reaching the Finals, made the grade with Saed Shabah scoring the best goal of the tournament. Russia and Cameroon failed to make the grade, despite Oleg Salenko scoring a record five goals against Cameroon for the former, and Milla becoming the tournament's oldest goalscorer, at 42 years 1 month and 8 days With hardly 90 seconds

remaining and 10 men on the field a skilful Roberto Baggio did the Houdini trick for Italy as he levelled the scores 1-all with Nigeria. And Italy sliced into the pre-quarterfinals.

Argentina's Diego Maradona scored an outstanding goal against Greece before failing a dope test and got thrown out just before he was set to establish a World Cup appearance record of 22 matches. While Colombia's Andres Escobar also grabbed the early headliners, scoring a self goal against the USA. He was later shot dead back home as the defeat cost the country's drugs and betting syndicates a fortune.

It was seven teams from Europe and Brazil in the quarter-finals. Italy went on to beat Spain to enter the semi-finals, and Bulgaria to make it to the final, both by an identical 2-1 scoreline, thanks to Baggio's brilliant show. In fact, Bulgaria had astonished everyone by ousting the defending champions Germany. The other semi-final between Brazil and the Netherlands proved to be the match of the tournament, Brazil eventually winning 3-2 after leading 2-0 at the break. Bebeto, Mazinho and Romario pretending to rock Beneto's newborn son Mattheus, born a few days earlier, was an unforgettable sight in this match.

Thrice champions both Brazil and Italy thus clashed for the title and the final turned out to be a dull and disappointing affair. For the first time in World Cup history, it all came down to penalties. Interestingly, Italy's saviour in earlier matches, Baggio became the culprit as his penalty flew high into the sky, and Brazil bagged the coveted title for the fourth time, a triumph they dedicated to Formula One driver Ayrton Senna, who was killed at Imola, Italy, earlier in 1994.

Final result: Brazil beat Italy 3-2 (on penalties). Winning captain: Dunga. Winning manager: Carlos Alberto Perreira. Final referee: Sandor Puhl (Hungary). Total attendance: 3,567,415. Total goals: 141. Highest goal-getters: Oleg Salenko (Russia) and Hristo Stoichkov (Bulgaria), 6 each.

Countries will depend on the strikers to propel them forward

FAUSTINA ASPRILLA

THIS Colombian is the most deceptive of players. When he is not near the ball, he looks like a guy who has no idea what the game is all about He walks around, with his hands on his hips, his back bent as if he has a severe spinal problem But as soon as the ball is passed to him he springs to life and then he dazzles with his dribbling and has an unerring instinct that leads him straight to goal

In the France 98 qualifiers he led the goal scorer s list for Colombia with seven goals in 12 matches He is a veteran having played the last World Cup in the USA But he has temperamental problems both on and off the field He has been suspended from the national team quite a few times

Asprilla started his career with Nacional and he helped them win the Colombian Championship Ambitious he decided to try his luck in Europe It was a right move He joined Parma and helped his team win

Faustina Asprilla. Colombia's deceptive mainstay





the Italian Cup, the UEFA Cup and the European Cup Winners' Cup. At present, on a fee of 7.5 million pounds, he has moved from Parma to Newcastle United, to partner Alan Shearer in the attack. He confirmed his potential when he scored a hat-trick for them in the European Champions League.

In France '98, he will have to have a fruitful partnership with Valderamma, if Colombia hopes to move to the second round.

DENNIS BERGKAMP

BERGKAMP joined Ajax's junior programme at the age of 12. He showed a natural talent immediately. In 1986, at age 16, technical director Johan Cruyff selected him to play for the senior team. Ajax won the European Cup Winners' Cup that year.

He made his international debut in 1990 and has played a key role in Holland's performance at international competitions. His goals against England at home and away matches enabled Holland to qualify for USA '94. Again, for qualification for France '98, he scored a hat-trick against Wales. So far, he has scored 33 goals for Holland, two short of the all-time record held by Faas Wilkes.

At club level, his performances have been impressive. He was the joint top scorer along with Romario

Dennis Bergkamp: Holland's Mr.Dependable





WORLD CUP'98

(who was then playing for PSV Eindhoven) in the Dutch League in 1991 After Romario left for Barcelona he was the League's top scorer and the Player Of The Year for the next two seasons

From Ajax, he moved to Inter Milan and helped them win the UEFA Cup Today, he plays for Arsenal in the English League Injuries have hampered his performances but when he is injury-free he is a delight to watch In France '98, if Bergkamp performs to his potential there is every chance that Holland will progress very far

ALAN SHEARER

ALK upto any manager and ask him 'If you could buy any player in the world who would it be? You will be surprised to discover that nine out of ten managers will say 'Alan Shearer within ten seconds

Looking back, it seems unbelievable that people doubted his talents or ever dared to question the idea that he was world class

Shearer, of course, is not of the genius level. He doesn't have the sudden deceptive change of pace which so often took Gary Lineker past the last line of defence. But he can score with either foot (though he still prefers his right) with his head from

inside or outside the area and from free-kicks. This year, he's developed another skill he can make a few goals too by hitting a few wicked crosses from the wing

Apart from his technique and vision, his other main asset is his physical strength. Once he's on the ball, he's very hard to dispossess. More often than not, the only way the defence gets the ball back is either by picking it out of the net or blocking the shot.

Technically gifted, a ruthless finisher, and a fiercely determined competitor, he has all the gifts to make an impact at France '98

JURGEN KLINSMANN

IKE Kylie Minogue, Michael
Jackson and Madonna, Jurgen
Klinsmann has mastered the art of
reinvention But unlike the
aforementioned he just keeps on
getting better and better, at least in the
eyes of everyone save Bayern Munich
coach Glovanni Trapattoni, who
committed the ultimate sacrilege by
recently dropping him from the
Bayern side

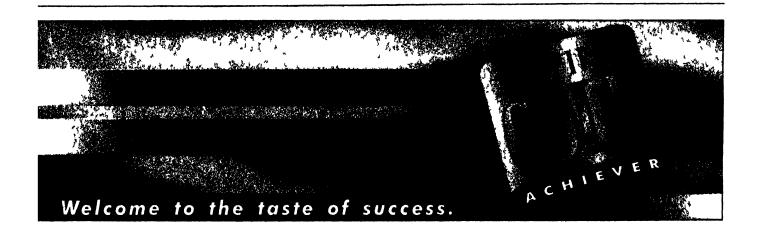
Klinsmann himself says there is very little about him which hasn't been said but we can add a little more here. His superb brace of goals against the Russians in Euro'96 and the hyperbole that surrounded his injury (which deprived him of a starting role against his adopted country (England)



Gabriel Batistuta. Argentina's goal scoring machine

in the semi-final) underlined the calibre of the striker with the characteristic high-kicking stride, balletic posture, complete repertoire of skills and an almost insatiable desire for self-improvement

When he eventually hangs up those well-travelled boots, he'll be missed For sure



RONALDO

OU can't open a newspaper in Spain these days without seeing a picture of a young Brazilian footballer with braces on his teeth. You can't switch on a radio without hearing his name. And sometimes, watching him play, you can't even believe what you are seeing; that he is one of the most gifted 20-year-olds ever to call himself a footballer.

Ronaldo Luis Nazario de Lima is already being spoken about in the same breath as illustrious predecessors like Johan Cruyff, Diego Maradona and Gary Lineker.

Strong, athletic, graceful and direct, Ronaldo has almost too much skill to be mortal. 'He's a world-class player who just happens to be 20 years old,' says his former manager Bobby Robson. 'He's unstoppable in the box, it doesn't matter how tightly defenders mark him, he'll find a way past and his finishing is top-class. But he can also drop back and play a 40-yard pass into space. and there aren't many strikers who can do that.' And this praise is from a master of the art of the under-statement.

Brazil have yet to benefit from his skills at any World Cup. At 17, Ronaldo was included as a non-playing member of his country's USA 94 squad, and was then in the side which reached the Olympic semi-finals in Atlanta. In France '98, the striker Pele has called a 'golden player' should take centre stage.



Marcelo Salas: Chile depend a lot on him to deliver the goods

Watch him carefully. He'll take your breath away.

GABRIEL BATISTUTA

RECONQUISTA, province of Santa Fe, Argentina is a peaceful village, where everyone knows each other, where you can sleep with your doors and windows open. Kids go with their dads every Saturday at dawn to the village market to sell the family chickens.

"But," recollected Batistuta, "I

could never twist their necks. That was too much for me. I let the others do it while I closed my eyes." This sensitive young man Batistuta, who was nicknamed the archangel Gabriel then becomes a demon as soon as he gets hold of a ball.

He grew up playing on the street, till late in the evening. His hero was Mario Kempes, the star of Argentina's 1978 triumph whose poster decorates Batistuta's room.

"I was nine," he recalled, "The World Cup was my first ever. It really opened my eyes to football. But not to the idea of making a career out of it. For me, it was more of a recreation among friends. I didn't imagine making it my profession. Rather I saw myself becoming a doctor."

The talent of this young long-haired striker nevertheless attracted the attention of scouts of Argentina's 'Newell Old Boys,' who immediately offered him a contract. He replied that he would give it a try. He was just 18.

Some months later, Batistuta made his debut in the semi final of the Cup, the most prestigious Inter-club game in South America. But competition for places at Newell was tough and he found it hard to make his mark. He signed up for River Plate at the end of the season.

"It was difficult being with Newell because I was always supporting Boca Junior," he said, "it was like I was selling my soul. But I had no choice. Boca and River are the two greatest teams in the country. I was offered the chance to play with one of them and I



MORID CUP. 98

didn't pass it up."

All went well for six months, then the coach, Mario was sacked and replaced by Daniel Passarella. "Batistuta? He has two left feet and only an undefined technique," he said. Passarella thought Batistuta was chubby and comical and nicknamed him 'El Gordo' (the fat one). Batistuta was sidelined. "It was the blackest episode in my career," he remembers bitterly.

But Boca Juniors, the club of his dreams, threw him a lifeline and in his first season there he crossed paths with Passarella's River four times, beat them four times and totted up four goals. Such sweet revenge gave Batistuta a new lease of life. 'El Gordo' became El Camion' (the truck).

Boca won the Legue Championship. Batistuta came to the attention of Florentina after a dazzling display in the 1991 American Cup which Argentina won, Batistuta scoring six.

"I felt like I was in a dream world," he says of the Florentina move. "Everything was happening so quickly it was fantastic!" The Italian club's representatives, who had come to pick up Diego Latorre, left with Batistuta. To play in Europe, and especially in Italy, in the world's most prestigious and demanding championship, is the ambition of every Argentinean youth who is



launched into professional football. At 22, Gabriel Omar Batistuta had made it.

However his first months in Florence were difficult. In summer 1991, ignored by Florentina's Brazilian coach, Lazaroni, he again found it difficult to get in the side. But he still maintained his professional approach: he was always first on the training field, never late, never uttering a wrong word or making a wrong move, and eventually, Lazaroni's successor, Radlee, launched him to success. In the following match, he scored a superb goal against Juventus, two more

Jurgen Klinsmann seems to be improving wi age, and Germany will depend on him a lot is France

against Genoa, then three againt Foggia. 'El Camion' became 'Batigol (as in 'Batistuta's goal').

Florence adored him and Batistuta repaid them well. He chose to remain at the club even when they dropped Division Two in 1994 ('A contract is promise: you keep it'). To date, he has scored more than 150 goals and was top scorer in the League in 1995 with 32

His faith in Florentina has also bee repaid: they won the Cup and the Italian Super Cup last season. "Toda"



have two major ambitions: to win the Championship with Florentina and also the 1998 World Cup with Argentina," says Batistua.

He was disappointed with Argentina's showing at USA 94: "It was my biggest regret because we had the best team. We deserved to win the final," he said. Batistuta and Passarella have now settled their differences and he dreams of glory at France '98. "This is the last World Cup of the century and the last for me. That's why it has a special place in my thoughts." he stated.

And afterwards? He wants to return to the 8000-hectare ranch he bought with his father. "My contract with Florentina comes to an end in June 2000. Then I'll be 31 and it will be time to say goodbye to football," he said and added, "There's more to my life than just football. Even if this sport has given me the greatest joy, I can't see myself staying on the field all my life."

DEJAN STANKOVIC

JUST nineteen years old, this baby-faced, lithe, lean and lanky striker from Yugoslavia, is considered the new sensation in European football. This talented Yugoslav striker, in his first full season for Red Star Belgrade, has created waves by scoring some sensational goals.

Such is the impression that Stankovic has created that Lazio of Rome have already secured his signature for the next season for a whopping eight million pounds. This is a lot of money for a teenager. But Stankovic is no ordinary teenager.

He scored twice on his international debut against South Korea last month. Impressed by his speed, control, majestic long range shots and overall poise and temperament, agents of several Spanish clubs, Glasgow Rangers and Roma of Italy tried to purchase Stankovic for the next season. However Lazio's owner Sergio Cragnotti, realising the competition, made a stupendous offer for the young teenage sensation.

Born in Belgrade on Sept. 17, 1978, Stankovic started playing for Red Star Belgrade in 1995. He was just seventeen years old then but still managed to win a Yugoslav league title. With Red Star he has won the Yugoslav Cup from 1995-97.

Stankovic's transfer is a world record fee for a teenager. However the Lazio officials have no regrets, as they feel Stankovic is a special talent "who can score and create as well."

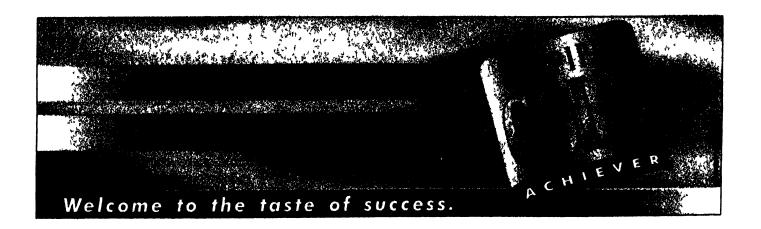
In the World Cup, the Yugoslav coach Slobodan Santrac has an abundance of talented forwards. Stankovic will struggle to replace free-scoring forwards Pegrag Mijatovic of Real Madrid, or Dejan Savicevic of A.C. Milan or Savo Milosevic of Aston Villa. Coach Santrac intends to use Stankovic sparingly. But this talented Yugoslav teenager has the temperament and skills to create a favourable impact whenever he is used.

MARCELO SALAS

HIS talented striker from Chile has silky skills and moves with feline grace. He is a prolific striker, scoring 10 goals in 13 games in the South American World Cup qualifiers. Just 23 years old, he has already scored 150 first class goals. The danger man in Chile's attack is nicknamed "Matador" for his killing instinct in front of the goal.

His career started with Temuco in Chile in 1992. He was soon snapped up by River Plate of Argentina. Salas excelled in Chile's first ever win over England at Wembley in Feb '98, scoring both the goals. He excels in the goalmouth with his close control, mazy dribbling and deft finishing. For Chile, he combines effectively with the highly talented Ivan Zamorano to form a formidable attack. Chile's double-pronged attack can trouble. the best in the world and the fans have nicknamed it, "the feared Za-Sa partnership."

Salas's style is similar to that of his idol Romario or Jimmy Greaves, hovering near the goalmouth but quicksilver in the box, always spotting an opening and having the ability to glide into space. His shielding and turning in the box are world class. Salas is eagerly sought after by European clubs and is likely to join an Italian club, either Lazio or Roma after the World Cup.





BITS & PIECES

Contribution Of Volunteers

Whether it be for the World
Cup or the Olympic Games, can do
without the help of volunteers They
are absolutely essential said Michel
Platini, the Co-President of the 1998
French Organising Committee for the

FIFA World Cup

A general rallying round has, in fact, become a tradition when it comes to organising major events, recent examples in France being the bicentenary celebrations for the

Michel Platini, Co-President of France '98 Organising Committee said: "Volunteers are absolutely essential" French Revolution in 1989, the 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville, and more recently in 1997 the World Youth Days

Outside France, thousands of volunteers have likewise answered the call for help for such large-scale events as the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics, the Barcelona Olympics in 1992, the World Cup USA 1994 and the 1996 Olympics at Atlanta

France '98 is no exception to the rule 12 000 volunteers are involved in organising this World Cup Final, the largest volunteer programme ever undertaken

- * 12,000 volunteers selected from the 22 000 candidates who had applied
- * 25% are women
- * 32 is the overall average age (35 for the men 27 for the women)
- * 41% are professionally active
- * 40% are students
- * 9% retired
- *71% have at least the Baccalaureat (exam taken at 18 in French schools) among their qualifications
- * 36% come from the footballing community (clubs, district leagues etc.)
- * 160 different jobs are carried out by the volunteers
- * 38% of them are working in Security
- * 16% with the Media
- * 15% in reception facilities
- * 250 000 training hours were carried out by 2,000 training staff who are overseeing 90 different training modules



Every Dog Has His Day

POUR months before the 1966
World Cup Finals in England, the
World Cup itself (the gold Jules Rimet
Trophy) was stolen while on
exhibition in London

One week later, a dog named *Pickles* discovered the Cup wrapped in a copy of the 'The News of the World' in his owner's front garden.

Pickles became a national hero overnight

World Cup Melt Down

THE original Jules Rimet World Cup trophy vanished a second time on December 19, 1983, this time from the Brazilian Confederation Office Brazil had been given the Jules RimetCup permanently after winning the World Cup competition for the third time in 1970

Subsequent to the robbery, two men were arrested Unfortunately, the trophy was never seen again The thieves had melted down the prize cup for its 30,000 pounds value in gold

A Whistle Away From Losing

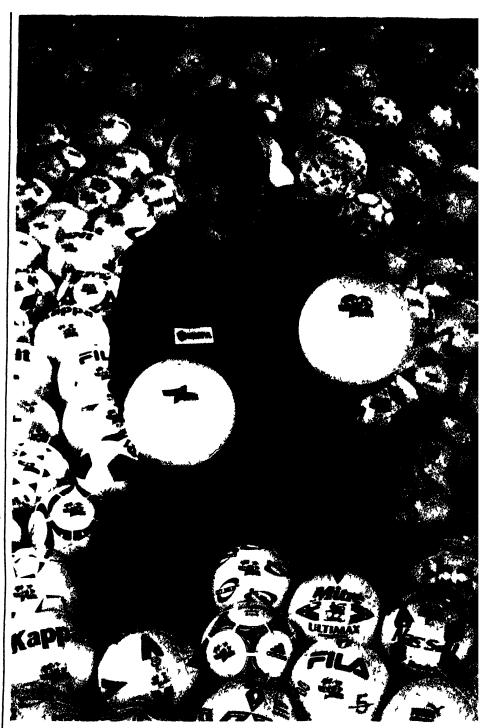
DURING the 1982 World Cup in Spain, Kuwait was playing in a group match when someone in the stands blew a whistle Assuming that the sound had come from the referee, the Kuwait team stopped playing Their opponents, however, ignored the whistle and scored a goal

Naturally, this resulted in great turmoil both on and off the field Suddenly, a rich and influential sheikh emerged from the crowd, threatening to call off the whole tournament if the referee did not reverse the goal. The referee did as he was told!

The Magic's Gone

JUAN OSCO did his utmost to see Peru's national team happier in this year's World Cup. He rounded up a team of top Peruvian witch doctors to hold rituals which included the stabbing and kicking of miniature dolls resembling top Colombian players. He also tied up the goalkeeper's hands and called on spirits to make players to lose energy or become sleepy on the bitch

It nearly worked Colombian niditelder Maurico Serna was nospitalised upon suffering an ippendicitis attack just after landing n Peru. To Osco's disappointment, nowever, Colombia earned an

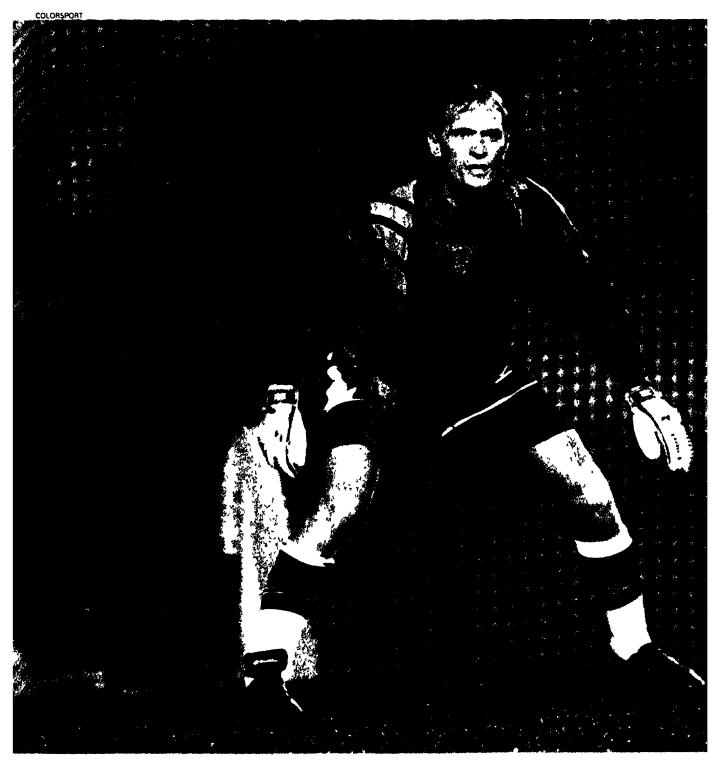


This is Walter Bolli, the man who tests the world's best footballs, surrounded by balls which have passed tests so tough that more than half those entered fail. The balls are measured, weighed, bounced, squeezed in water and pounded 2,000 times against a steel plate. Those which pass are allowed to bear the prestig ious FIFA marks - FIFA Approved/FIFA Inspected for the very best balls. Mr Bolli is one of the few people who is watching the FIFA World Cup Finals, but his interest is focussed on the performance of the FIFA Approved balls than the results of the 64 matches

important draw, and, unlike, Peru, went on to qualify for France '98

Too Stunned

ALL eyes were on Brazil in 1950 Everything went smoothly for the World Cup hosts through the first round and subsequent 7-1 and 6-1 thrashing of Sweden and Spain But according to the round robin format of



In penalty situations, the goalkeeper is probably the loneliest man in the world

the day, Brazil still needed a draw against Uruguay to win the Cup.

With more than 200, 000 screaming fans on hand, Brazil scored early in the second half. But Uruguay equalised quickly and scored again with eleven

minutes remaining in the match.

When the whist le blew, Brazilian officials were too stunned to present the World Cup to its rightful owners. At last, FIFA president Jules Rimet chased down the Uruguayan captain himself. Few in the crowd took notice. An entire nation had gone into mourning.

Rules For Fools

Rule No. 1 - Team Size

Each team consists of 11 players, 3 substitutes and one trainer who is required to chew his nails, spit, chain smoke and scream from the sidelines.



Rule No.2 - Match Length

Officially, each match consists of two 45 minutes halves. However, the referee will allow play to continue after 90 minutes has elapsed to make up for time wasted on injuries and other trivialities.

If the score is even in a World Cup

tinal round match, play is extended further with 30 minutes of sudden death. If it's still even (which it usually is), a penalty shoot-out decides the winner.

Rule No.3 - Scoring

To score a goal, a player must kick or head the ball into the goal (preferably that of the opposite team). The entire ball must go over the goal line for a goal to count.

Goalies are permitted to use their hands, but are not allowed to wear uniforms that look anything like those of the rest of their team.

Rule No.4 - No Hands

Hands are not allowed in football, hence the name of the sport. The ball may be in contact with all other body parts (even the ones that leave players doubled over in pain). To keep players from fondling the ball, the opposing team is given a free kick whenever 'hands' is called by the referee.

Rule No.5 - Fouls

Elbows to the chin, unnecessary head-butts and tackles are not allowed in football. Tackling is especially serious if it comes from behind or if the tackler tackles with his leg straight and his studs pointing upward. When such incidents occur, a foul is called and the opposing team is awarded either a penalty or a free kick.

To encourage foul rulings, many players take acting classes in the off season.

Rule No.6 - Free Kick

A free kick is awarded when a foul is committed outside the penalty area. The other team can form a wall and cover their private parts to stop the ball from reaching the goal or other sensitive spots.

Rule No.7 - Offside

The offside rule forbids a player to receive a pass unless a member of the

other team (other than the goalie) is either next to or between that player and the goal. Strangely enough, none of this applies in the case of throw-ins.

The basic intention of the offside rule is to keep scoring to an absolute minimum.

Rule No.8 - Corner

When a team puts the ball over its own extended goal line, the other team is given a free kick from the corner of the field nearest to where the ball went out. Prior to each match, flags are placed in each corner to make this play more difficult for the keeper.

Corners are useful for keeping the crowd from falling asleep.

Rule No.9 - Throw-in

When the ball is kicked out by one team, the other team gets to throw it in again. A throw-in must be performed by hoisting the ball up behind the head with both hands and with both feet firmly on the ground. These regularity measures ensure that the player can only throw the ball as far as his nearest opponent.

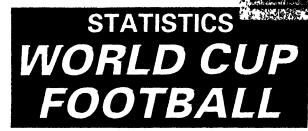
Rule No. 10 - Yellow and Red Cards

A yellow card is for dangerous tackles, acting, diving, time wasting, bad-mouthing the referee and various other actions which make the game more exciting. Two yellow cards carry the same weight as one red card.

A red card is typically given when a player fouls an opponent who has come free and is nearing the goal. A red card means the player is sent off the field and is not replaced. The player is also forbidden to play in the next game and must often endure extended silent treatment from his mother.

Rule No.11 - Penalty

A penalty is given if a foul is committed inside the penalty area. Since there is no wall, penalties are practically always goals! In penalty situations, the goalie is probably the loneliest man in the world.



TEAM WHICH HAS BEEN CHAMPIONS FOR THE MOST NUMBER OF TIMES:

Brazil: Four times-1958, 1962, 1970, 1994

TEAM WHICH HAS REACHED THE FINAL FOR THE **MOST NUMBER OF TIMES:**

Germany: Six times: 1954, 66, 74, 82, 86, 90

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL TEAM IN THE WORLD CUP

Champion Germany:

Runners up Third

Fourth

Three times

Three times Two times

- Once

: 1954, 1974, 1990

: 1966, 1982, 1986 : 1934, 1970

Brazil has won the World Cup four times

: 1958

THE MOST NUMBER OF MATCHES WON BY A TEAM

Brazil:

MATCHES 73

WON 49

DRAWN

LOST 11

159

GOALS FOR GOALS AGAINST 68

PHOTOGRAPHS COLORSPORT

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MATCHES PLAYED IN WORLD CUP: 516

THE-TOTAL NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED: 1584

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF GOALS PER MATCH: 3.06

THE MOST NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED IN A WORLD CUP:

YEAR 1982

VENUE Spain MATCHES PLAYED 52

GOALS SCORED 146

AVERAGE GOALS PER MATCH

2.81

THE MOST NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED IN A MATCH:

12 goals: Austria (7) vs Switzerland (5) in Switzerland, 1954

THE MOST NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL GOALS SCORED IN A MATCH:

5 goals by Oleg Salenko (Russia) vs Cameroon, 1994

THE MOST NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL GOALS SCORED IN A WORLD CUP:

Just Fontaine (France) - 13 goals, Sweden, 1958

THE PLAYER WHO SCORED THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL GOALS IN WORLD CUPS:

Gerd Muller (West Germany)-14 goals (10 goals in 1970; 4 goals in 1974)

BIGGEST VICTORY MARGIN IN WORLD CUPS:

10-1: Hungary vs El Salvador, Spain, 1982

9-0: Hungary vs South Korea, Switzerland, 1954

9-0; Yugoslavia vs Zaire, West Germany, 1974

^{* 140} goals scored in only 26 matches averaging 5.38 goals per match in the 1954 World Cup in Switzerland

HATTRICK IN A FINAL

Geoff Hurst (England) - 3 goals vs West Germany, 1966

THE PLAYERS WHO HAVE PLAYED THE MOST NUMBER OF MATCHES IN THE WORLD CUP:

Diego Maradona (Argentína)-21 matches (1982-1994) Lothar Matthaeus (Germany)-21 matches (1982-1994)

Uwe Seeler (West Germany)-21 matches (1958-1966)

Wladyslaw Zmuda (Poland)-21 matches (1974-1986)

PLAYER WHO HAS REPRESENTED HIS COUNTRY IN THE MOST NUMBER OF WORLD CUP COMPETITIONS:

Antonio Carbajal (Mexico): Five times: 1950-1966

PERSONS WHO HAVE WON THE WORLD CUP BOTH AS A PLAYER AND A COACH:

Mario Zagalo (Brazil): Footballer (1958, 1962); Coach (1970)

Franz Beckenbauer (West Germany): Footballer (1974); Coach (1990)

THE MOST ATTENDANCE IN A MATCH:

1,99,854: Brazil vs Uruguay, Rio de Janeiro (Maracana Stadium), Final match, 1950.

THE MOST ATTENDANCE IN A WORLD CUP

35, 67, 415: USA, 1994

THE FIRST GOAL IN A WORLD CUP

Laurent: France vs Mexico, Uruguay, 1930

MILESTONES:

100th goal: Jonason-Sweden vs Argentina, Italy, 1934

500th goal: Hetmut Rahn-West Germany vs Czechoslovakia, Sweden, 1958

1000th goal: Rensenbrink—Holland vs Scotland, Argentina, 1978 1500th goal: Claudio Cannigia—Argentina vs Nigeria, USA, 1994 1584th goal: Kenneth Anderson—Sweden vs Bulgaria, USA, 1994

(The '94 Final between Italy and Brazil was a draw.

Tie-breakers are not included in this list)

THE MOST NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED BY A TEAM IN A WORLD CUP:

27 goals in 5 matches by Hungary at an average of 5.40, Switzerland, 1954

TEAM WHO WAS UNBEATEN IN THE MAXIMUM MATCHES IN WORLD CUP FINALS:

13 matches (won-11: drawn-2) by Brazil: 1958 to 1966.

THE ONLY PLAYER TO SCORE GOALS IN ALL THE FINAL ROUND MATCHES:

Zaitzinho (Brazil)-7 goals in 6 matches, Mexico, 1970

THE ONLY COACH TO WIN THE WORLD CUP TWICE:

Victorio Pozzo (Italy): 1934, 1938

THE ONLY PLAYER TO SCORE GOALS IN TWO SUCCESSIVE WORLD CUP FINALS

Vava (Brazil)-2 goals vs Sweden in the 1958 final 1 goal vs Czechoslovakia in the 1962 final.

THE ONLY ASIAN COUNTRY TO PLAY IN THE QUARTER FINAL OF A WORLD CUP

North Korea, England, 1966 (Lost to Portugal 3-5)

THE OLDEST PLAYER TO SCORE A GOAL IN THE WORLD CUP FINAL ROUND

Roger Milla (Cameroon) vs Russia on 28.6.94 at the age of 42 years

THE FASTEST GOAL OF THE WORLD CUP FINAL ROUNDS

Vaclav Masek: Czechoslovakia vs Mexico, Chile, 1962: 15 seconds.

COMPILED BY HARIPRASA® CHATTOPADHYAY





(Top): USA'94 had the highest attendence figures in World Co history. (Below): Roger hijle of Cameroen, at 42, was the oldest player to score a goal in the World Cup final rounds

I was midnight.

I was awoken by the bursting of machine gun fire. Or was it crackers? I wasn't sure. I got up from my bed and went and looked out of the window. The sight was breath-taking. The whole hill was bathed in the bluish light of the moon. There were dots of light in the different houses at different levels of the hill. It looked like diyas. The stars were twinkling brightly.

In the distance, I saw that large mass of hills that is part of the greatest mountain range in the world: the Himalayas. Sadly, Kanchenjunga was forever behind some clouds, like a newly married woman hiding behind her saree pallu.

In this sort of tranquil setting, it was nerve-wracking to hear the sound of gunfire. Was lovely Gangtok, like most of the North-East, falling into the web of militancy?

I slipped on my jeans and sneakers, and a pullover and stepped out of the room. I went down the stairs and surprise of surprise, the main door was open. There was nobody around, either behind the reception desk or at the gate. What sort of hotel was this, I thought to myself. No security at all. I vowed to give the hotel staff a piece of my mind.

I walked out on the road and went uphill. The sound became louder and louder. I turned a corner and saw a group of young men bursting crackers. Was Sikkim celebrating Diwali, I wondered, months before the rest of India did? There were shouts of jubilation and cheering. I recognised my hotel waiter.

I approached him and said, "What's happening?"

"India has won against Australia. Sachin played an unbelievable innings. I cannot describe it to you. It was fantastic."

India had won the Coca Cola Cup at Sharjah and I had completely forgotten that we were playing that evening. The hotel, astonishingly, had no cable TV but the view from the room compensated for the lack of scenes from the TV screen.

"Sachin is great," shouted a youth,

freewheeling

in Levis jeans and white sneakers. Their faces were flushed red with excitement and happiness aided, no doubt, by several glasses of liquor that young people always seem to have when they congregate together.

What an enormously gifted player Tendulkar is, as I heard details about his mind-boggling innings. Suddenly, I envied him his talent, his brilliance, his genius. How come he has it and the rest of us don't? Why are we so ordinary? No action of ours is ever outstanding. It is infused with mediocrity although our ego does not allow us to think so. Why is God so niggardly with his gifts?

My peaceful mood changed swiftly to one of inexplicable irritation. I took the waiter aside and asked him why they did not have cable TV in the hotel.

"Sir, what to do," the waiter said, shrugging his shoulders, "the owners haven't got down to arranging it."

"Where did you see the match?" I asked.

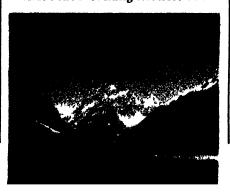
"In the nearby Tip Top hotel," he explained.

"The door was open. Nobody was around," I said accusingly, "Thieves could have walked in easily."

He was in a far too excited mood, to get ruffled. He smiled and explained coolly, "Don't worry Sir. Even thieves were watching the telecast. No point trying to steal from houses since everybody is awake. They would have got caught."

I went for a walk. I strolled uphill for about fifteen minutes. In Gangtok you are either going uphill or downhill. One immediate benefit of all this walking is that you develop strong legs.

That's the first thing I noticed about



the girls as they sauntered around in their tight little mini skirts. They had such lovely shapely calves.

I came to a section of the road where the view was once again magnificent: high hills, the trees swaying in the chilly breeze, the buzzing of crickets. I sat down on a stone parapet, my legs dangling in space...

Too much success, I realised, can be a double-edged sword. Life can get perilous for Sachin. There are too many temptations along the way that can derail his attention, focus and determination.

For example: Tendulkar is earning enormous sums of money. How do you remain hungry when you are physically and mentally satiated with wealth that should enable a few generations of his family to live comfortably?

He has to adopt some sort of detachment (Buddhist-style) to everything that is happening to him. But it's so enormously difficult not to get swayed when you are only 25. Does he have the strength of character to remain focused? Can he sustain the tunnel vision to help withstand the adulation of 950 million and not ease up mentally, physically and psychologically?

Only the future will give us the answer. Is he going to be the greatest or is he going to be an 'almost greatest'? Measuring him by his own high standards, if he becomes the latter, that would be like being an 'also-ran'.

The intermittent bursting of crackers stopped. It became completely silent once more. It was revelation time for me. I realised that for an average, not very talented, middle class guy like me, with my dreams dying one by one, as I grow older, I know that I will not achieve anything awesome in life.

So, I look for the simple things in life to give me pleasure. In Gangtok this was what I got: the chance to breathe in air that was absolutely pollution-free.

This, apart from India's win, was the best bonus of the brief break that I took.

Shevlin Sebastian

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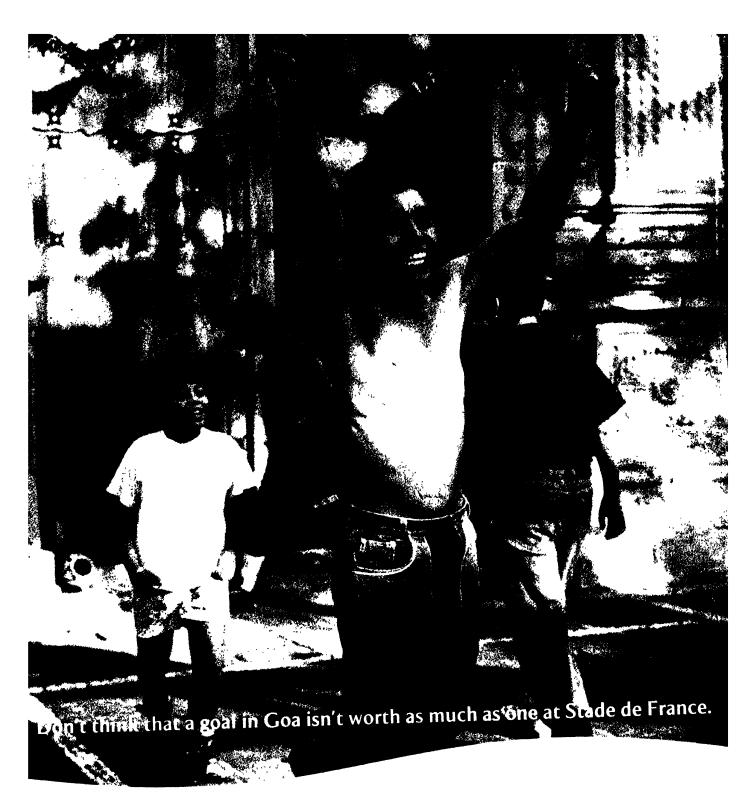
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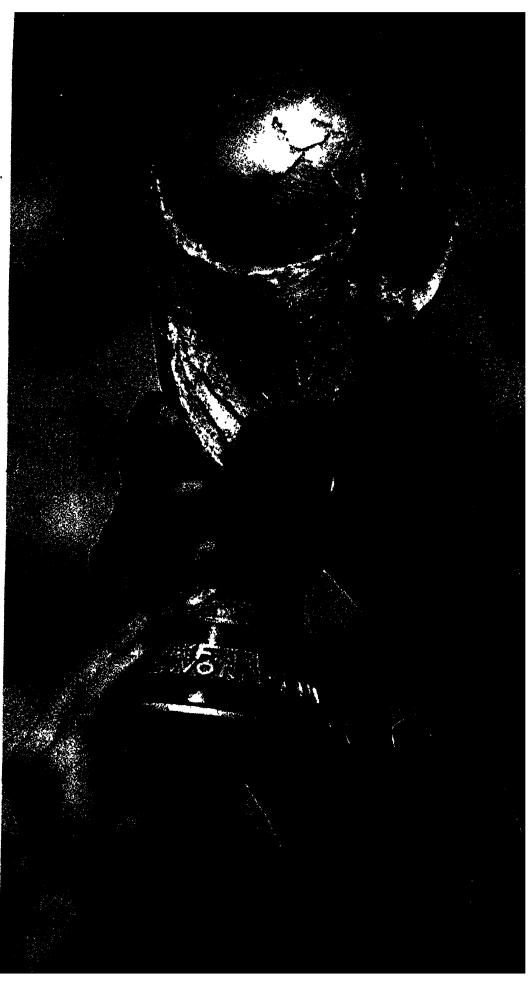


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A WORLD CUP SPECIAL

EDITOR:Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi

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WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!



FRANCE crushed a strangely off-form Brazil to win the World Cup for the first time

FROM NOVY KAPADIA, PARIS

RANCE S football dreams have come true. It was not champagne football all the way but in the dream final they got the dream result trouncing four times champions Brazil 3.0. The man, they call 'the God'', Zinedine Zidane juggled, wriggled perspired and gave an inspired first half display to score with two immaculate near post headers off corner kicks taken by Emmanuel Petit and Youri Djorkaeff respectively

The blonde midfielder Petit made a darting run from defence, accepted a return pass from Arsenal club team-mate Patrick Viera and scored with a deft left footer

France thus ended the oldest monopoly in the world of sport, the six nation domination of the World Cup They became the seventh nation to hold aloft the 36 cms high, 18 carat gold trophy designed by an Italian sculptor By winning the last World Cup of the millenium on home soil, France emulated Uruguay in 1930, Italy in 1934, England in 1966, Germany in 1974 and Argentina in 1978 and became the sixth home Zinedine Zidane holds aloft the trophy as Roberto Pires (left), Bixente Lizaraza (second ieft), Marcel Desailly share the joyous moment. A happy French coach Alme Jacquet (bottom right) was vindicated after months of fierce criticism by a section of the French press



nation to triumph in the greatest show on earth. Also, at the end of the 20th century, there is not even a shadow line between Europe and South America as regards World Cup domination. The sixteen World Cups held this century, have been evenly shared: eight each to Europe (Italy, Germany, England and France) and South America (Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay).

Their taciturn 57-year-old coach Aime Jacquet has now retired in honour to his chalet near Annecy and can watch cycling, his favourite sport. Prior to the start of the tournament,

Zidane (10) outjumps Leonardo and scores his first goal against Brazil in the Final

this clarryoyant coach said, "I am going to retire after I take my lap of honour at the Stade de France." Like the late Frank Sinatra he did it, "My Way".

Talented players like Eric Cantona and David Ginola were discarded for the sake of harmony. Jacquet juggled his resources, shuffling his forwards in a relentless search for an ace. Due credit should be given to Jacquet that even without a world class striker, his team won the coveted World Cup,

scoring fifteen goals and conceding just two in seven games.

He fashioned a team, according to the strengths of the available players, a rock-solid defence and an imaginative, central midfield. In the knock-out stages only defenders and midfielders scored for France: stopper back Laurent Blanc the 'golden goal' vs Paraguay and right back Lillian Thuram scored a brace in the semi final vs Croatia.

Jacquet's ability to organise and inspire his players has made him the Napolean Bonaparte of French football. In both the semi final and

final, France were reduced to 10 men, midway through the second half. Key players were dismissed, stoppers Laurent Blanc (semis vs Croatia) and Marcel Desailly (two yellow cards in the final vs Brazil).

Yet the French team kept their cool. In the final 20 minutes, Petit stepped back to play as stopper back with Frank Leboeuf. The hard-tackling, speedy Patrick Viera was the perfect replacement in midfield. When France struggled to score in the league games, the speed of substitute winger Thierry Henry proved decisive in the opening games against South Africa and Saudi Arabia.

France won the final because of superior tactics and commitment. Brazil lost the final in the dressing room. Ronaldo who was having treatment for an injured ankle in hospital was not on the original

Zidane's second goal goes through the legs of Roberto Carlos

team-list. Then he was re-instated.
Ruud Gullit felt it "was a bit of a
wind-up", a clever tactical ploy by the
wily Mario Zagallo to befuddle the
French.

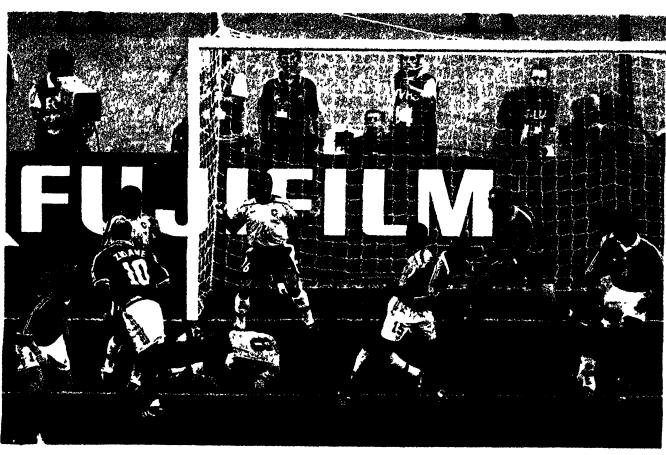
Ronaldo played with the aid of a pain killer but could not produce his devastating runs and prompt shots. Later, some cynics said that team sponsors Nike forced Zagallo to include Ronaldo in the playing eleven against his wishes which led to Edmundo and skipper Dunga raising a stink in the dressing room. It certainly seemed to have upset Brazil's concentration and rhythm.

Playmaker Rivaldo was often caught in possession. No Brazilian striker could get behind the French defence. Christian Karembau shadowed Roberto Carlos when he went on the overlap. Petit and French skipper Didier Deschamps won the midfield battle against Dunga and Cesar Sampaio. The Brazilian stopper Aldair and Junior Baiano were slow and tentative. Cafu was the best

Brazilian on view but his final pass and cross was often awry.

Because Ronaldo lacked pace,
Brazil were squeezed in midfield and
showed no variety in attack. They
could not raise a gear when it
mattered the most. They had just four
scoring chances in the match.
Rivaldo's first-half header off a corner
kick and Ronaldo's angular right
footer were saved by French
goalkeeper Fabien Barthez, whereas
Bebeto's feeble try with the
goalkeeper off balance was kicked off
the line by Desailly. In injury time,
substitute Denilson stuck the
crosspiece after an audacious dribble.

What does this win mean to France? Lionel Jospin, the socialist French prime minister praised the multi-culture within the French team. Claude Bartolone, Minister in charge of Urban Affairs said, "I hope this win by a black-white and Arab team will help drive racist sentiment away and show the country that with will and co-operation, one can win."



A noted French political and social commentator Alain Genenstar felt the success of the multi-racial French football team had massive political significance, as it was a rebuff to the racists. Success in football has helped in decolonising the mind of the average 'white' French citizen. The hatred of immigrants declined as long as they scored goals. Football success has united the nation.

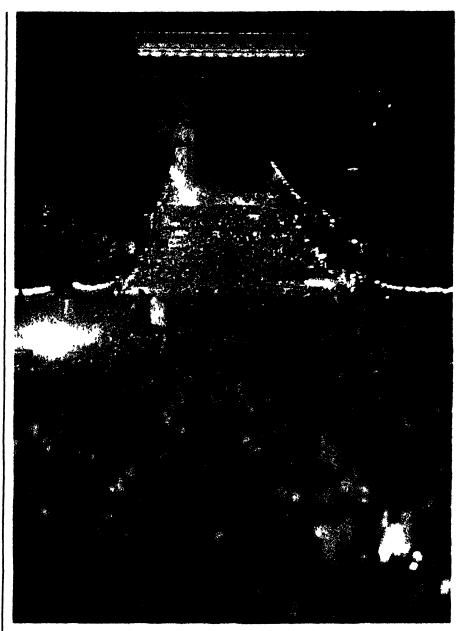
Until this World Cup, it was common for the suburban youth, mostly Arabs or Blacks to support other teams. The presence of players like Zidane of Algerian descent, Djorkaeff of Armenian descent, the

Lionel Jospin, the socialist French prime minister praised the multi-culture within the French team. Claude Bartolone, Minister in charge of Urban Affairs said, "I hope this win by a black-white and Arab team will help drive racist sentiment away and show the country that with will and co-operation, one can win."

Ghanain born but French raised Desailly and others of African descent like Thuram, Henry and Argentine immigrant Davide Trezeguet won over the common man.

A newspaper editorial said that the French people have not been this united behind a cause since the days of Napolean. There were scenes of delirious joy at Champs Elysees, Place de la Concorde and Arc de Triomphe, as banner waving youngsters and shrieking pedestrians danced all night to celebrate the greatest sporting achievement of France.

There was a feel good factor in France and the scenes of joy were the

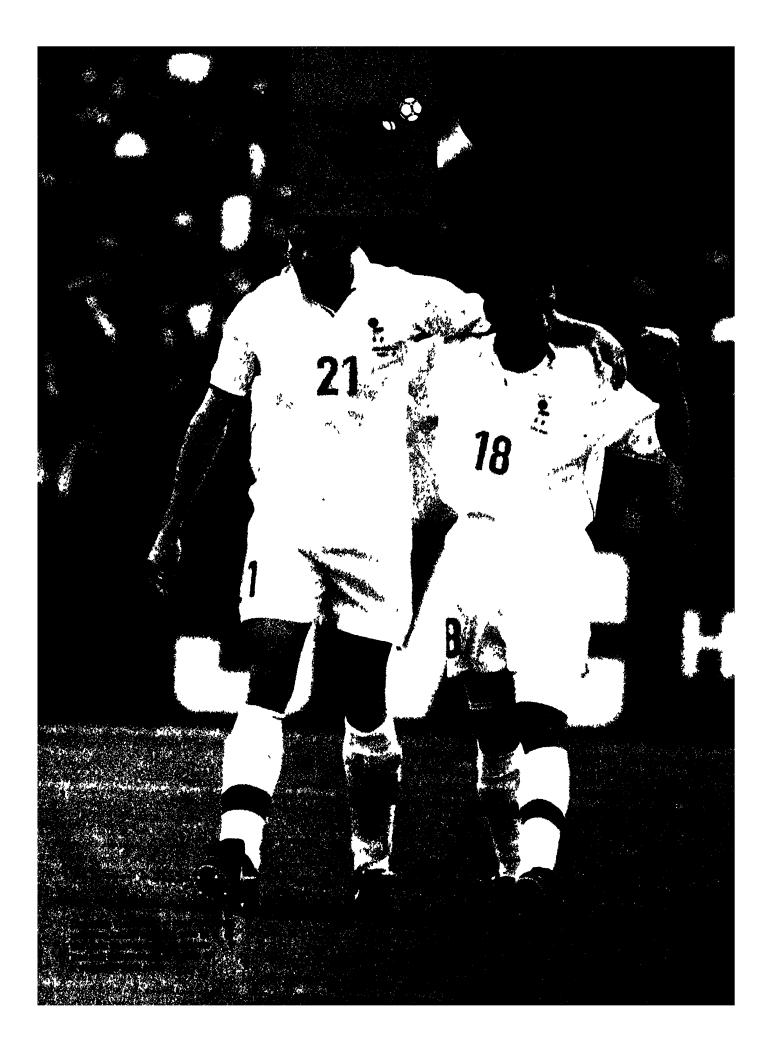


Hundreds of thousands of French football fans crowd the Champs Elysse in Paris where a portrait of soccer star Zidane is projected on thr Arc-de-Triomphe

most rapturous since the day when Allied troops entered Paris in August 1944 and liberated the nation from the rule of the Nazis. Skipper Deschamps summed it up by saying, "We won because our players wanted to go down in history and France is now on the point of becoming one of the great footballing nations."

Ultimately it was a lively World Cup but without an outstanding team or a truly great individual performance. There were no innovations in tactics or formations. Only David Beckham (England vs Columbia) and the Paraguay goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert managed to master a light ball well enough to get a free kick properly on target.

Beckham scored the best direct free kick of the tournament. Only Argentina's free kick against England, to equalise (scored by defender Zanbett) showed any imagination. The shirt-pulling, feigning for fouls and wrestling for possession were an irritating feature of these finals. FIFA in trying to snuff out the tackle from behind has raised another monster, the divers and duckers—a problem which needs urgent eradication.



BETHAT SHONE Presenting some of the players who made an immediate

HE fascination of each World Cup is the emergence of new stars and new heroes. Unknown or comparatively lesser known players either hog the limelight along with established stars or sometimes even surpass them.

Given below are some of the superstars at France '98.

ADRIAN ILIE(Romania): He is being hailed as the "new Maradona of the Carpathians." Strong, quick and direct, Adrian Ilie has been a revelation in France 98. He is one of those rare players who is both a goalscorer as well as a playmaker. So Ilie if he chooses could also become the "Ronaldo of the Carpathians." His overall workrate, touch and vision in distribution is astonishing. Romania's legendary playmaker Gheorge Hagi has announced his retirement after France 98. However, the Romanian fans and coaches feel Ilie is an ideal replacement. Veteran defender Gheorge Popescu has immense faith in Ilie's abilities. Popescu who had toured India in 1990 with PSV Eindhoven for the Super Soccer series lavishly praised Ilie and said that, "he has the qualities to be the next Hagi in a new developing national team. He has the skills and motivation to excel, and in the World Cup he showed that he was a consistent performer."

It has to be seen however if in the future Adrian Ilie is used as a playmaker or a roving front runner. He has a phenomenal ability as a striker and can strike powerfully with both feet. His quick dribble and curling shot which led to the match-winner vs Colombia was one of the best goals of France 98. The match-winner was a cocktail of power, beauty and invention. His Real

Sociedad manager says that Ilie strikes like a cobra, the suddenness of his move and shot is devastating. The hallmark of his game is his uncanny ability to evade his markers with a body feint or sudden acceleration and

connection for the Italian team. He grew up in Sydney, as his family migrated to Australia. His father, a former Juventus star was winding down his career there. Initially Vieri was un-coordinated and not very



Adrian Ilie of Romania (Left) is one of those rare players who is both a goal scorer and a playmaker. Romania will depend heavily on him in the future

close control.

Ilie was born in Craiova, but moved to Bucharest in 1993, to improve his football career. He won three titles with Steau Bucharest but then left the Bucharest club for Galatasaray in Turkey. Ilie was not very happy there and from Turkey was transferred to Real Sociedad in Spain.

CHRISTIAN VIERI(Italy): This rugged, tall and bustling striker, is the Australian

interested in sports. However, the outdoor life 'Down Under' toughened him up. His father's initial coaching, made him a promising player. Again at the insistence of his father he went to Italy and started with a lower division club.

After working his way up via no fewer than five lower-division clubs, Vieri's talents were recognised when he was purchased by mighty Juventus for the 1996-97 season. For the

1997-98 season, the 24-year-old Vieri moved to Athletico Madrid for a whopping 12.5 million pounds. Earlier his incredible strength and aerial supremacy had impressed Italy's Under-21 years coach, Cesare Maldini (now the national coach). Christian Vieri became a regular in Italy's under-21 years and Olympic sides.

Prior to France'98, he faced stiff competition from Ravenelli and Casiraghi for the front-runner's position. However, coach Maldini made Vieri his first choice striker. It proved to be an inspired selection as Vieri was Italy's saviour in the initial phase with some incredible goals. His goals against Chile and Cameroon demonstrated deftness of touch and the rare goalscorer's instinct of being able to dart into scoring positions in the box and the strength to hustle off a defender. To shake off his marker Vieri drifts wide to the flanks. Against Austria he scored a typical tall centre forward's goal, towering above defenders and nodding home a left flank cross. He also excelled as a target-man always available in space to receive a through pass. Overall he linked adeptly with either Roberto Baggio or del Piero. The hallmark of Vieri's game is his courage, ability to absorb pressure and pull brilliantly off defender's shoulders. He never shirked from crunching tackles and with his bulk, adeptly shielded the ball. He can function as either a battering ram type of striker, the old fashioned centre-forward who excels in the air and is difficult to dislodge in the box or as a modern forward with fine touch, skills and game sense. He helped Italy top group B, with four goals from three matches and scored in every match.

CAFU(Brazil): The attacking and overlapping wing backs were one of the highlights of France'98. There were several splendid performances. For most experts however, the most consistently, brilliant attacking wing back was the Brazilian Cafu. There were many brilliant right wing backs like Lillian Thuram of France, Albert

Ferrer and Carlos Aguilera of Spain and Slaven Bilic of Croatia. However the pick of them all was twenty-eight-year-old Cafu, playing in his second World Cup. He gave the powerful Brazilian attack an extra dimension by his frequent, well timed overlapping runs and measured crosses. Cafu who plays for Roma in the Italian league, first came into the limelight in the final of the 1994 World Cup. Regular right back Jorginho was troubled by an injured hamstring muscle in the final against Italy. Cafu came on as his substitute and impressed with his speed. However, it was noticeable that he was more comfortable going forward but his crosses were not always very accurate. Years of experience in the demanding Italian league made him a more accomplished defender as it has improved his positional play and defensive abilities.

Zico, the technical co-ordinator of the Brazilian team was concerned that Cafu does not cross the ball correctly. He spent hours trying to improve the quality of crosses from the flanks. Zico has helped Cafu make the right adjustments in his game. Now Cafu is playing with the flair and confidence that has made him the most feared over-lapping defender in the world. Prior to France'98 it was thought that left back Roberto Carlos would be the star wing back with his whiplash shots and penchant for the over-lap. However Cafu is the cynosure of all attention. By his sustained brilliance, he has been more dominant, penetrative and effective than the dynamic Roberto Carlos. Cafu's idol is the brilliant Carlos Alberto, captain of Brazil's 1970 World Cup winning team, arguably one of the greatest teams ever. Cafu was born three days before Carlos Alberto scored a memorable fourth goal vs Italy in the final at Mexico. Cafu's dream is to emulate his hero and score a goal in the World Cup Final.

MARCELO SALAS(Chile): This brilliant 23-year-old striker is nicknamed "El Matador" (the killer) for his poaching ability and predatory instincts in the

box. He pounces on half chances and converts them into goals like a panther stalking its prey. This was evident in the goals he scored against Italy and Chile in the group B league matches. After Ronaldo he was one of the most exciting strikers to watch in France'98. His ability to turn sharply, suddenly accelerate and close dribbling skills made him very difficult to contain. Above all he has the supreme confidence to run at defenders and beat them with his dribbling skills—a pleasing but dying art in international football. Foreign coaches rated him very highly. Cesare Maldini said, "Salas is a star forward. He is always hungry for the ball, knows where to pass and when to strike for goal and is always on the go. He is very difficult to mark." As Italy discovered in their league match, Salas can be potent in the air. Though just 5ft. 9ins tall he has a prodigious spot jump which leaves taller defenders stranded and flat-footed. Salas scored three goals in the first two matches he played against Italy and Austria. In the World Cup qualifiers he scored 11 goals in 13 matches, and has scored 150 first class goals despite a short career and many stoppages due to injuries.

Salas started his career with
Temuco club in Chile. He next moved
to River Plate in Argentina in
September 1996, and scored in his
debut against Boca Juniors. His goal
scoring skills made him a legend for
River Plate. Several European clubs
including Juventus, Lazio and
Manchester United sought to sign
him. However, club president Alfred
Davicel refused to sell him for less
than 20 million dollars. He finally
signed for the Rome based Lazio and
will play in the Italian league next
season.

ARIEL ORTEGA(Argentina): In the 1994 World Cup, he came on as a substitute or replacement for Diego Maradona. Even then his feline grace and silky dribbling skills, were evident. Now four years later in Erance'98, 24-year-old Ariel Ortega is being hailed as the successor to Maradona.

His quick turn on the ball and amazing body feints and dribbling skills are reminiscent of the great Maradona. However, unlike Maradona, he prefers to play wide on the flanks and is equally comfortable on both the right and left flanks.

At France '98, Ortega displayed outstanding ball control, playmaking

returned to his magical best like most of his team-mates. Ortega plays abroad, for Valencia in Spain.

TARIBO WEST(Nigeria): This flamboyant Nigerian stopper back who plays for UEFA Cup champions and Italian league runners-up Inter Milan, has confirmed his reputation as

Outstanding ball control, playmaking Milan, has confirmed his reputation as PHOTOGRAPIS APP

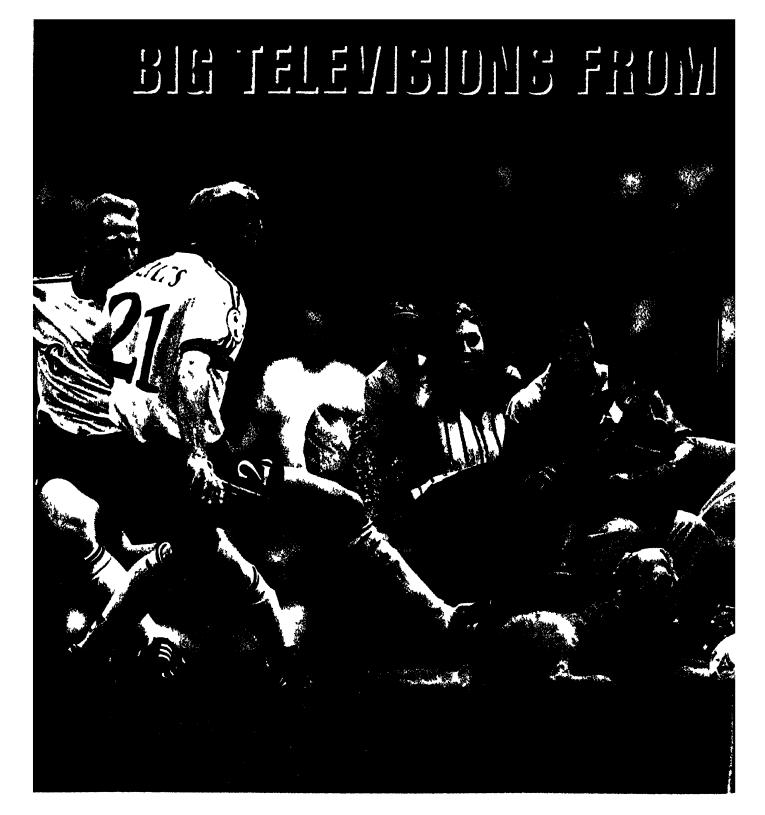
Taribo West (Right) of Nigeria is today regarded as one of the most feared stopper backs in international football. His is a reg to riches story

skills and a sharp eye for the goal. In the 5-0 rout of Jamaica, Ortega scored two memorable goals, a delectable chopped shot over an advancing custodian and a fine placement after a mazy dribble. Ortega brought variety in Argentina's attack, with his delicate touch, ability to play quick wall passes, amazing dribbling and ability to score from any angle. Coach Daniel Passarella was worried when prior to the World Cup, Ortega was slightly out of form but at France '98 he has

one of the hardest tacklers and most feared opponents in international football. This hard-as-nails stopper back with his crunching tackles, strength on the ground and in the air, tamed several stalwarts at the World Cup like Spain's latest superstar Raul Gonzales and Luis Henrique and Bulgaria's temperamental Hristo Stoitchkov.

His rise to stardom is a real case of rags to riches. He had to battle

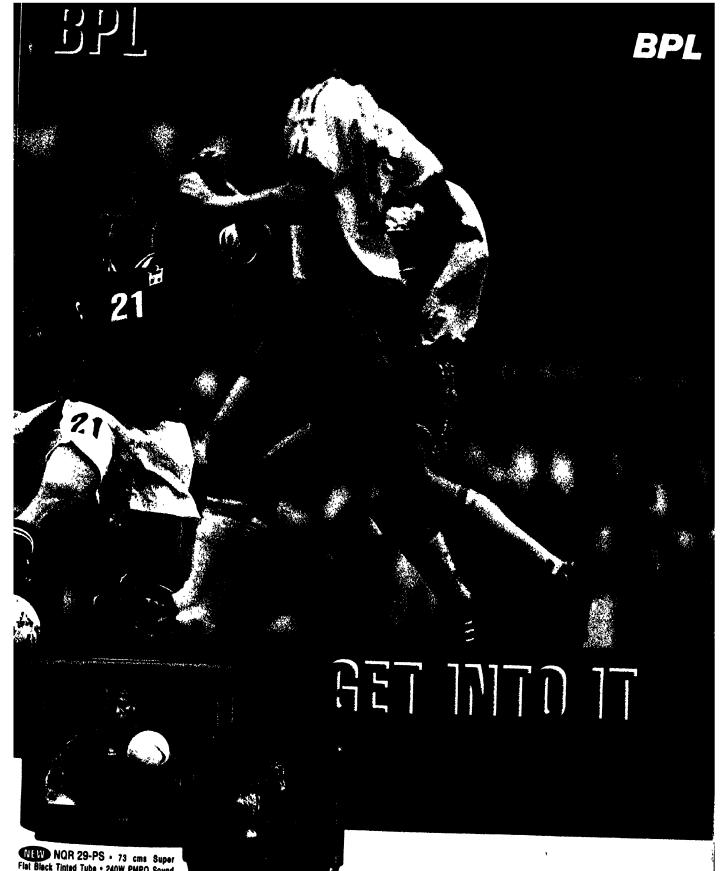
adversity to reach the top. The youngest of five boys born into poverty in Nigeria's Port Harcourt district he made seven hour bus journeys to Lagos as a boy to make a name for himself with the Julius Berger club. His mental toughness came from his surroundings. In his neighbourhood there was massive unemployment and drunkenness. Brawls and knife fights were a frequent occurrence. As Taribo said, "When I saw my friend murdered, I realised that the way out was football and I just had to succeed." With the Julius Berger club he got wages of 90 pounds a week, which was a minor fortune for him then. He spent the money wisely on food, fruit juices and improving his physique. In Nigeria, the coaches often tend to dis-regard home based players and prefer to play stars in Europe. Realising this Taribo was desperate to move to any European club. He wrote to several European clubs and finally persuaded Auxerre to give him a trial. He reached Auxerre even though his ticket and 600 pounds travelling money were nicked at the Lagos airport. He struggled in his first year at France. Recalling that harrowing experience Taribo said, "I was very homesick and didn't speak French. For more than one year I could not get into the playing eleven because I was very aggressive on the pitch and liked to play an attacking game instead of a positional game." Coach Guy Roux persisted with Taribo West. Auxerre is a small-town, provincial club noted for developing unknown talent and home-based players. Taribo West is also a product of their excellent youth system. His international debut was in 1994 against Sweden and he helped Auxerre bag a rare French league and Cup double in 1995. Then in 1996 he was selected for Nigeria in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and won an Olympic gold medal. In 1997-98 he moved to Internazionale of Milan and excelled in the demanding Italian first division. With his tackling, positional sense and overall domination of forwards, Taribo West was one of the best defenders in France'98.



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FRENCH FIESTA

Some pictorial asides from the '98 World Cup



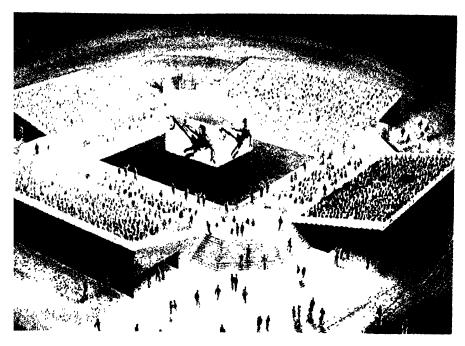
(Left)Ster Brezilien striker Bebeto and his wife Denise watch a parade of Disney characters as they tour EuroDisney in Marne-La-Valle, north of Paris

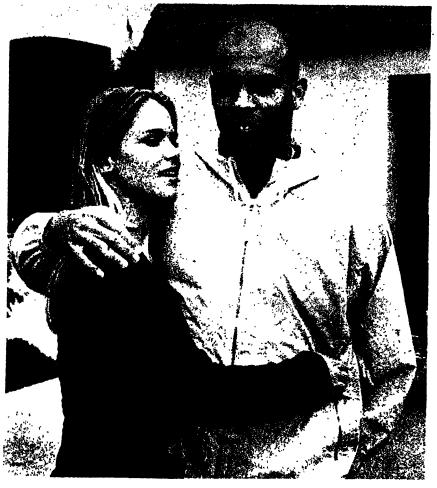
(Facing page, top)This version of Footix designed by Parislan jeweller Marc Princ weighs a total of 5 kgs, and was made of 2 kgs of gold and 1.15 kgs of 40 caret diamonds. It went for sale at 2,200,000 French francs

(Facing page, bottom)Waitress Cecilia of Santiago, Chile sports her country's flag as a top as she attends to customers watching a Chilean match on television

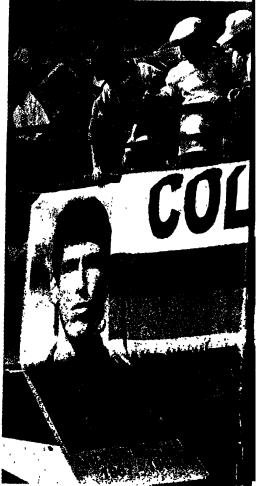




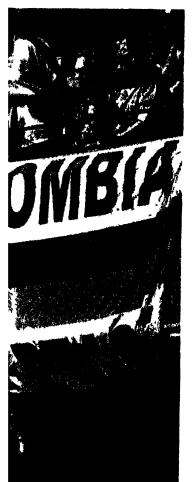












(Left)Colombian supporters display a benner in memory of Andres Escobar who was murdered in Medellin after a row over his own-goal in the 2-1 first round defeat by the USA in '94. Even this edition of the World Cup saw some Colombian players getting death threats

(Extreme left)Behind every successful men is a women...in Ronaldo's case it is Suzana Werner who in France rooted for Brazil and Ronaldo in all their matches

(Top left)This is Univers Foot, a digital stadium that enabled apactators to watch World Cup matches on four giant screens set up in an actual soccer pitch at Le Bourget. The fans had to pay between 10 to 40 US\$

(Top right)British soccer fans burn the Tunisian flag after they classed with French police, prior to England's match versus Tunisia



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Cartoons on the World Cup by GOPAL SARKAR









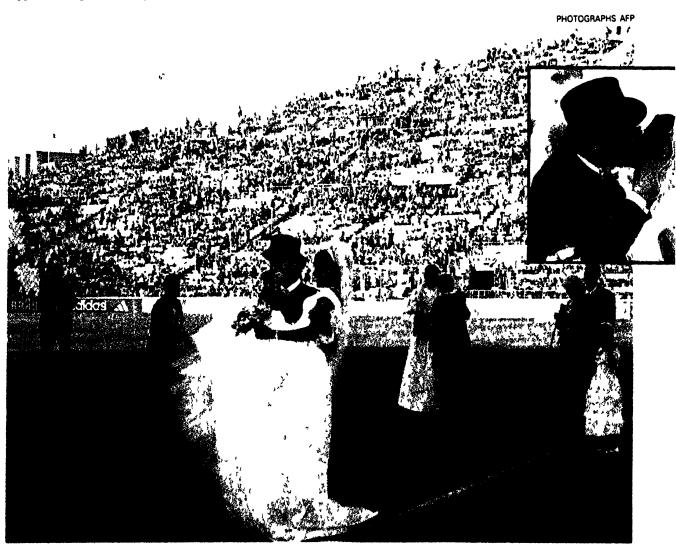
WEDDING BELLS

An unique ceremony took place at France '98

OT only the national teams of Brazil and Norway met on the pitch of the Velodrome Stadium in Marseille during their Group A match. Before the match, an unique ceremony took place. 28-year-old Norwegian Oivind Ekeland married his Brazilian fiancee, Rosangela de Souza (29). The couple had been given special permission to marry on the Velodrome pitch in a brief service one hour

The couple had been given special permission to marry on the Velodrome pitch in a brief service one hour before the kick-off of the Group A match.

"The couple asked us several weeks ago if it would be possible to get married in the stadium," said FIFA Director of Communications, Keith Cooper. After long consideration, FIFA felt that this would be a good way of showing that "when we talk about football bringing people together in personal ties of love and friendship, we mean it. Former president Havelange himself and World Cup Organising Committee chairman Lennart Johansson gave their personal approval, "explained Cooper.



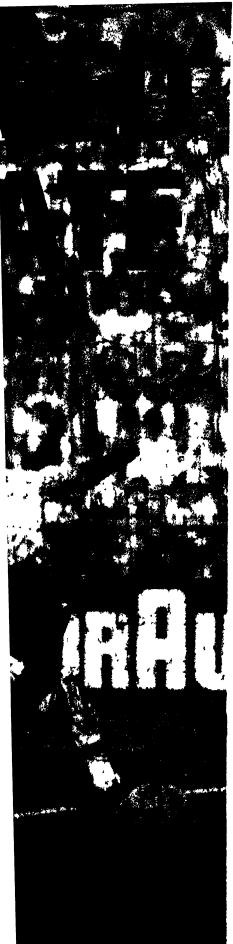
Does flair win matches or taction.
Nobody can say for sure

Id S

Playing as a defensive midfielder against Scotland,

Brazil's Cesar Sampaio (5) scored within three

minutes in the opening match in the first round





BY NOVY KAPADIA, FRANCE

HE perennial and never resolved debate in football, do great players or tactical innovations win matches has surfaced once again in France 98? Through the passing years, many innovative tactical formations have emerged in the World Cup. In the 1954 World Cup, Hungary spearhe aded by the brilliant Ferenc Puskas used the concept of twin strikers, the 'M' formation, with Puskas and Sandor Kocsis, the inside forwards playing upfield in attack with their wingers and, Nandor Hidegkuti playing as a deep lying centre forward or attacking midfielder in the manner in which Roberto Baggio or Alessandro del Piero and Paul Scholes play for Italy and England, respectively.

Four years later in 1958, Brazil introduced the 4-2-4 formation. Sir Alf Ramsay in 1966 became famous

for his 'wingless wonders' as England won the World Cup

without a conventional winger, playing in the 4-3-3 formation. Four years later in

the heat of Mexico, Ramsay modified his system to play in the 4-4-2 formation.

In the 1974 World Cup, came one of the most glorious exhibitions of attacking football, with Holland playing "Total Football" with emphasis on roving roles for all the players, rapid interchange of positions, speed of movement and precision passing. The successful teams of the Eighties and early Nineties Germany and Argentina developed the 3-5-2 formation, which is the most popular formation in France 98.

However the question that still remains unresolved, is it the quality players or superior systems that bring success? A team like Brazil in 1970 had such brilliant players like Pele, Jairzinho, Tostao, Gerson, Rivelino,

Clodoaldo and Carlos Alberto that nobody remembers what system they played in. It was a fiesta of glorious attacking football. Michel Platini considers the 1970 Mexico World Cup as the greatest of them all, because of the consistent display of highly-skilled attacking football. However many teams, especially the finalists Brazil and Italy had the quality players to play sparkling football.

In the 1994 World Cup, Brazil did not have so many great players, so the system or their tactical formation became very important. To curb the problem of getting caught in the counter attacks, Brazil deployed two defensive midfielders. Stockily-built Mauro Silva jokingly referred to as the "Mike Tyson of Brazil" was the defensive midfielder along with skipper Dunga. So it was the system as much as the players which enabled

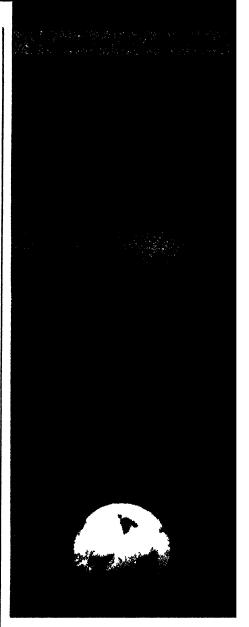
Brazil to achieve success. It was not "Jogo Benito" or beautiful football,

the purists and many Brazilians derided the defensive tactics but it enabled Brazil to win a World Cup for the first time since 1970.

The question that arises is why did Brazil persist with tactical inflexibility, despite being packed with individual talent in the 1998 extravaganza? The veteran Brazilian coach Mario Zagallo opted for cautious tactics. Prior to the start of the tournament, he categorically said that, "for us, the whole is more important. We don't have any key player." Knowing their job on the field, rather than improvising is considered more important even for Brazil. That is why Zagallo brought on the brilliant left winger, Denilson whose amazing dribbling skills are reminiscent of Garrincha, Stanley Matthews and George Best of years gone by, only as a substitute in the group matches.

The Brazilian approach is the trend followed by all the 32 competing





nations in France 98 Tactical discipline, the importance of systems takes precedence over individual flair A Group E league match between Holland and Belgium was like chess at high speed, with players of both sides ultra defensive and cancelling themselves out Predictably it ended ın a goalless draw

Platini wanted the 1998 World Cup to set the tone for football in the 21st century Yet the 16th edition of the World Cup has shown that adventurous football is not favoured by the coaches The emphasis is on tactical formations and how to stifle the opposition Scoring on the break or with measured build ups, known as



the 'passing game' or from set-pieces were the way in which most goals were scored.

Why is this happening in modern football? The Dutch legend, Ruud Gullit in an article in *The Observer* pin-pointed the causes for such caution. He wrote, "...all the coaches more or less forbid fun to the extent that players no longer even think about it. They are asked to play no-risks, no-frills football and that is the profession they learn. I know jobs are at stake and people want to see winning teams, but we should be careful of taking self-expression out of the game." Gullit was right.

With so much at stake, national

pride, exorbitant money, TV deals with the European Broadcasting Union is alone worth 340 million Swiss francs and a total TV audience estimated at 37 billion, winning is more important than playing the game. Uninhibited football, mazy dribbles which led to brilliant goals were few and far between. The flair was often shown by lesser teams, Mustafa Hadji of Morocco who ran the length of the field on the left, feinted to evade his marker and scored with a whiplash angular shot against rugged Norway in a Group A league. The ultimate in solo brilliance was by Cameroon's Pierre Njanka in the 1-1 draw with Austria in the Group B

league phase. Njanka's goal had vision, power and delectable dribbling skills.

Germany's phenomenal consistency and success rate, thrice champions and thrice runners-up has led many nations to emulate their tactical formation of 3-5-2. Austria, Belgium, South Korea, Iran, Jamaica, Romania, Croatia, Morocco, Scotland and Spain to mention a few, all relied on the 3-5-2 system. Most of the European nations except for France and Denmark, who both used a flat back four, used the three-back system.

Some countries had variations of this basis system. For instance, Yugoslavia used a sweeper-back and

three defenders as did Italy. Paraguay played in the 3-4-1-2 formation, with an attacking midfielder and two defensive midfielders Spain showed some variations Their canny coach Javier Clemente shuffled his players and tactics according to the opposition They played with three defenders but sometimes used two forwards Kiko Narvez and Raul Gonzales upfront or sometimes just one front runner Kiko or Alfonso Perez. In midfield occasionally, they used two defensive players, Fernando Hierro and Miguel Nadal, like Brazil or sometimes just a solitary holding midfielder, Hierra. They always had three attacking midfielders. Spain preferred attacking midfielders on the flanks or retractable wingers similar to England. In contrast, Brazil prefer width to be provided by their speedy overlapping wing backs Cafu and Roberto Carlos.

Brazil's success in 1994 has also led to many teams favouring the concept of two defensive medios. Even hosts France abandoned traditional Gallic flair and used this tactic. Deschamps and Emmanuel Petit or Patrick Viera were their two defensive midfielders. England for instance under the perceptive Glenn Hoddle has altered the tactical formation of his country, mixing the German and Brazilian systems.

For years, England played with a flat back four. Under Hoddle there is greater flexibility. He used the German system of three defenders, a last man in defence like Tony Adams and two markers Gareth Southgate

and Sol Campbell Like Brazil, Hoddle used two defensive midfielders, Paul Ince and David Batty. What is the advantage of the two defensive or holding midfielders, a tactic favoured by many coaches in this World Cup? The two wide men in midfield, Darren Anderton or David Beckham and Graeme Le Soux on the left, fall back



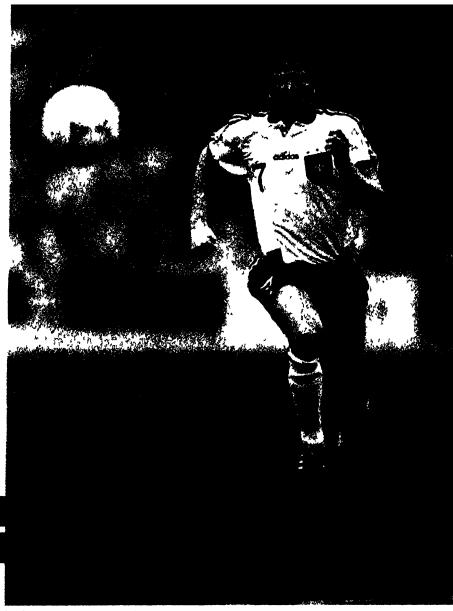


and function as wing backs when the team is under pressure. Paul Scholes plays as an attacking midfielder, dribbling his way into attacking positions, passing accurately and even drifting his way into attacking positions.

England like Italy have opted for only one striker. England used skipper Alan Shearer upfront as the roving striker with Teddy Sheringham playing a little deep, functioning as a target man for passes. Italy have a different variation in attack. They opt for the "big and small" concept. The tall and burly Christian Vieri is the central striker, with the shorter but more skilful Roberto Baggio or Del Piero functioning a little deeper and acting as playmakers. As variation in their attack, Italy sometimes used Enrico Chiesa or Francisco Moriero wide on the flanks to provide thrust.

Germany has perfected the system of 3-5-2. They are the epitome of tactical efficiency. After their success in Euro '96, Bertie Vogts had said, "My team is my star. We take players who fit into our system." For Germany system has always been more important than flair. Dieter Elts, Germany's star defensive midfielder, and the scintillating Matthias Sammer, arguably the best defender in the world, due to injuries were not selected for France 98. Vogts chose players who could play similar roles. Olaf Thon fitted in adeptly in the role of an attacking libero. Twenty-four-year old Jens Jeremies and burly Dietmar Hanman were

their star defensive midfielders. Their contribution was vital in obtaining possession for attacks to be initiated by either of the nippy midfield duo Andreas Moller or Thomas Hassler. As a variation in attack, Germany also used attacking wing backs, Stefan Reuter and either newcomer Jorg Heinrich of Borussia Dortmund or the



lanky Christian Ziege of Bayern Munich to send in high crosses or low, flat crosses from the flanks.

Except for Paraguay, the other South American countries, including holders Brazil opted for a flat back four. Zagallo made some interesting tactical changes. In their opening league match against Scotland, Brazil played in the 4-2-2-2 formation, with Dunga and Cesar Sampaio as defensive midfielders, Rivaldo and Giovanni as attacking midfielders and Bebeto (for the injured Romario) and Ronaldo upfront. For the next match against Morocco, Brazil made a slight change in midfield. The formation switched to 4-3-1-2. Leonardo played in the hole behind the strikers as an attacking midfielder.

Argentina also used the flat back

four system but with three midfielders and Ariel Ortega, hailed as the 'new Maradona' in his country, as an attacking player behind the two front runners, Gabriel Batistuta and either Claudio Lopez or Hernan Crespo or Abel Balbo.

Chile were similar to Brazil, relying on the brilliance of their mercurial strikers Ivan Zamarano and Marcelo Salas, with Marcelo Vega in the centre and Clarence Acuna wide on the right, as attacking midfielders.

Two of the Asian nations, Japań and Saudi Arabia played with four defenders. Japan relied on a 4-3-1-2 formation whereas Saudi Arabia preferred a 4-4-2 formation. Nigeria used the 4-4-2 system but deployed retractable wingers, a system favoured by former England coach

Terry Venables. Finidi George on the right and Garba Lawal or Kanu on the left showed remarkable stamina and adaptability as they fell back to help in defence and moved up as conventional wingers when required. Norway, the USA and Bulgaria played with a single attacker.

Norway's philosophical coach Egil Olsen, a former journalist, believed in the traditonal long ball, fast running game and so played a standard 4-5-1 formation. Chelsea's lanky Tore Andre Flo was their lone front runner. Bulgaria had greater variation, with Stoitchkov and Kostadinov functioning on the flanks in support of their single striker and falling back when required. So their 4-5-1 formation often became a traditional 4-3-3 formation.

The USA used a sweeper-back,
Thomas Dooley, two markers, the
promising Eddie Pope and David
Regis, four in midfield, two attacking
midfielders and a single front runner in
either Eric Wynalda or the Yugoslav
migrant Preki Radosavijevic or Roy
Wegerle. The American game plan
was to restrict opportunities for their
opponents and so they used this
defensive 3-4-2-1 formation.

Ultimately, there is a shadow line between two options: either the Brazilian flair or the Teutonic method and spirit. It depends on the quality of the players and the football traditions of each country. As Bertie Vogts said, "We have to play to our strengths, we have to play the German way." for football to be a spectacle, a carnival, a joy to behold, it is the quality of the players, the sophistication and subtlety of their passing, the impeccable technique and above all improvisation in passing and dribbling. Playing with flair is always an attractive proposition and that is why Brazil is the most attractive proposition but sheer flair does not always win gruelling tournaments like the World Cup. Remember what happened to Brazil of 1982 with Zico, Socrates and Falcao? Hence the amalgamation of flair and method. that is what the coaches in France 98 have tried to achieve.



54 / 1914 3

After 24 years of distinguished service, JOAO HAVELANGE quits as the President of FIFA

E could not even visit his wife Anna Maria for six months when she was on crutches, following a knee operation But he visited 192 countries thrice at least when he headed the Federation Internationale de Football Association for almost a quarter of a century, travelling around the globe practically non-stop for more than 300 days a year In the end he calculated that he travelled a mind boggling 7200 days in his 8760 days of his presidency

He not only had the opportunity to meet all the heads of state, kings and queens and prime ministers throughout the world, but could meet His Holiness the Pope face-to-face thrice-moments which he as a Catholic cherished the most Recipient of several awards for his grandiose services to sports he was even nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize a decade ago

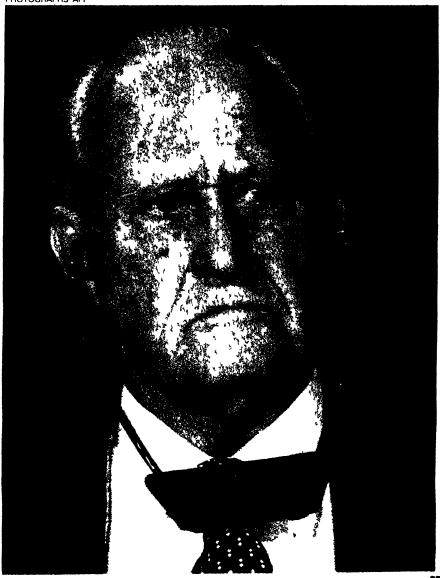
Dr Joao Havelange's 24-year stint as the president is next only to Jules Rimet's 33-year tenure among only the seven presidents of FIFA in over 90 years Thanks to Havelange's immense commitment, determination, dedication, initiative, patience, tenacity and work, FIFA has now flourished as a sports association providing football that much needed dynamic impetus to keep pace with the modern times

Born in Rio de Janeiro on May 8,

1916, Havelange was a sportsperson himself before taking up the executive's job He competed twice in the Olympic Games—making his

debut as a swimmer for Brazil in 1936 at Berlin and 16 years later as a member of Brazil's water polo team in 1952 at Helsinki Four years later in

PHOTOGRAPHS AFP



Havelange listens to speeches at the 51st FIFA Congress held at Paris

1956, he headed the Brazilian contingent to the Melbourne Olympics.

Before he moved into the FIFA headquarters at Zurich, he served as the president of the Confederagao Brasileira de Desportos (CBD) from 1958 to 1974 Brazil won the World Cup football thrice during his tenure. As a member of the International Olympic Committee since 1963, he ensured that football was one of the most successful disciplines in the Olympics. Women's soccer found a place as a medal sport in Olympics two years ago at Atlanta thanks mainly to his initiative.

Havelange was elected as the FIFA president in Frankfurt on June 11, 1974 and was confirmed again five times in succession — in 1978 at Buenos Aires, in 1982 in Madrid, in 1986 in Mexico, in 1990 in Rome and in 1994 in Chicago.

When he took over the highest chair in FIFA, succeeding England's Sir Stanley Rous, FIFA had a conservative outlook. The only activities then included were the quadrennial World Cup and the Olympic Games. FIFA's survival depended on resultant revenue which was hardly enough to meet salaries, issue monthly bulletins and cover miscellaneous expenses.

A doctorate in law and a highly successful businessman, Havelange's aim and concern was to transform football, the most democratic of all sports, into a business-like enterprise that would withstand the challenges of the next millennium. An 8-member staff in 1974, overseeing the affairs of 141 member national associations, working from a private residence, the 'Dewald Villa' which also happened to be the home of the general secretary and his family, has now multiplied into a staff of over 50 at the spacious modern FIFA House in Zurich. It looks after the day-to-day affairs of the 204 member nations from all corners of the earth. Today, an efficient PR system and communication network links FIFA to the world through the Internet Web-site.

THE NEW KING

SEPP BLATTER takes over as the President of FIFA



N economist by profession Joseph Blatter had been by Joao Havelange's side for 23 years ever since he was made the director of technical development programmes at FIFA in 1975. Blatter assisted in all the Brazilian's endeavours with competence and dedication. Having now occupied the highest office in world football it should not be difficult for the first Swiss to head FIFA, which has had its headquarters in Zurich (Switzerland) since 1932.

In a historic vote at the Salle Equinoxe in Paris, the 51st FIFA Congress elected the 62-year-old Blatter—general secretary of FIFA since November 1981 and promoted Chief Executive Officer in 1990 after a distinguished career in business and sport—as the

eighth FIFA president. The national associations elected him with a count of 111 votes to 80 in the first ballot. Thereafter, UEFA president Lennart Johansson of Sweden withdrew his candidature in the second.

Blatter, who forged his campaign in tandem with former French international and co-president of France '98 Michel Platini, in fact, fell short of the 128-vote target (two-thirds majority), by a mere 17 votes. FIFA delegates made it clear that they liked the way Blatter has operated for all those years as general secretary.

Born on March 10, 1936, in Visp, Switzerland, Blatter was an active footballer from F948 to 1971. As an youngster, even though Sepp's heart was in football, he often took part in athletics too. In school, he was part of a group that used to hide and then sneak out to play football while the other school children were busy with the service after assembling for the mass.

Before he became a footballer with Salgesch FC in the early sixties, as a 15-year-old he had the job of keeping the wine cellar in order in Hotel Dom in Saas Fee.

Between 1964-66 he served as the general secretary of the Swiss Ice Hockey Federation. From 1974-84, he was the press officer of the Swiss Association for Sports and the Committee for Elite Sport. He gained first taste of the international sports scene when he was involved in the organisation of the 1972 and 1976 Olympics at Munich and Montreal while he served as the director of sports timing and public relations of Longines S.A. On the personal front, Blatter is a divorcee with one daughter.

Before the elections, in his last message to the FIFA member national associations, Blatter had emphasised that he would pay increased and special attention to the underprivileged national associations, because in many countries they represent a source of hope to many people. His objectives for the FIFA of the future are better cohesion and fewer discrepancies between the affluent and the underprivileged.

Havelange might have brought myriad changes to the world soccer governing body, making it a money-making machine. Now, a long time ally of Havelange, also looks set to continue steering FIFA in the same direction. With Havelange becoming FIFA's honorary president (though he will have no say in the decision-making process), the two greats will still effectively keep control.

Aishwarya Lakshmi

During the course of his term of office, Havelange not only expanded the range of FIFA competitions but also increased the number of teams in the World Cup Finals from 16 to 24 (from the 12th edition in Spain in 1982) and now from 24 to 32 in the last edition of the 20th century in France'98 - which is among his great accomplishments. Some of the tournaments which he was instrumental in launching were the World Championship for indoor football, now popularly known as 'Futsal', which has already seen three editions. Then there is the FIFA World Youth Championship started in 1977 for players under-20 years, the Under-17 championship started in 1985 and the FIFA/Confederations Cup.

Havelange's other achievements which mean a great deal to him, as he himself revealed in his address to the 51st FIFA Congress in Paris two days before the France'98 kick-off, include the re-affiliation of the People's Republic of China which had been outside FIFA for 25 years; re-uniting North and South Korea in a single team for the 1991 World Youth Championship in Portugal; the integration against considerable odds



During the course of his term of office,
Havelange not only expanded the range of FIFA competitions but also increased the number of teams in the World Cup Finals from 16 to 24 in 1982 and from 24 to 32 in France'98

of the Israeli association as a member of Europe with full rights; resolving the dilemma of South Africa's membership and bringing them back into the FIFA ranks; and the qualifying tournament for the 1994 World Cup which reunited the teams of Iraq and Iran, Saudi Arabia and the two Koreas and Japan in Qatar in 1993.

From almost a zero position in terms of money to invest in the development of the game on a global scale, Havelange from his rich business experience negotiated billion dollar contracts for television broadcasting rights and marketing and sought the backing of sponsors, based on the assumption that FIFA is an economic enterprise and football was its product.

In his address to the 1998 FIFA Congress, Havelange mentioned that he was moved by four sentiments as he bid farewell to the top post.

"The first is of respect...

"The second is gratitude, friendship and nostalgia especially when I think of the many companions who worked with such dedication and commitment alongside me at FIFA for many years as members of the EC and the national associations...

"The third emanates from the satisfaction of having conscientiously fulfilled a mission, tirelessly and without losing heart, both as a sportsman and as an entrepreneur, and if I may say so, as a human being, an idealist and a visionary...

"The fourth is the pride of having worked unremittingly for unity and peace in the world football community".

Havelange, also president of a leading Brazilian bus company called 'Cometa S.A.', besides being a director of several companies in the insurance and chemical industries sector, has now left behind a legacy of \$60 million plus about \$4 billion to be generated by the television, marketing and sports equipment contracts. Having relinquished the FIFA president's post, he truly deserves to enjoy his daily routine of jogging and swimming and spending more time with his family in Rio.



FRANCE '98

FANS, FANS, FANS...

They were all over the place at France 98







Left above: Brazilian fans cheer their team during a first round match against Morocco. Even though the defending champions lost to Norway, they topped the group.

Top right: This Norweglan supporter looks tense during the Norway-Scotland tie. While Norway moved up to the second round, the Scots had to fly back home.

Bottom: Italian supporters meet a few Cameroonese and wish each other in central Montpellier, southern France prior to the Italy-Cameroon match.



Above: Mexican supporters cheer their team against South Korea. Below: A couple of Chilean supporters look dejected after their team drew with Austria 1-1



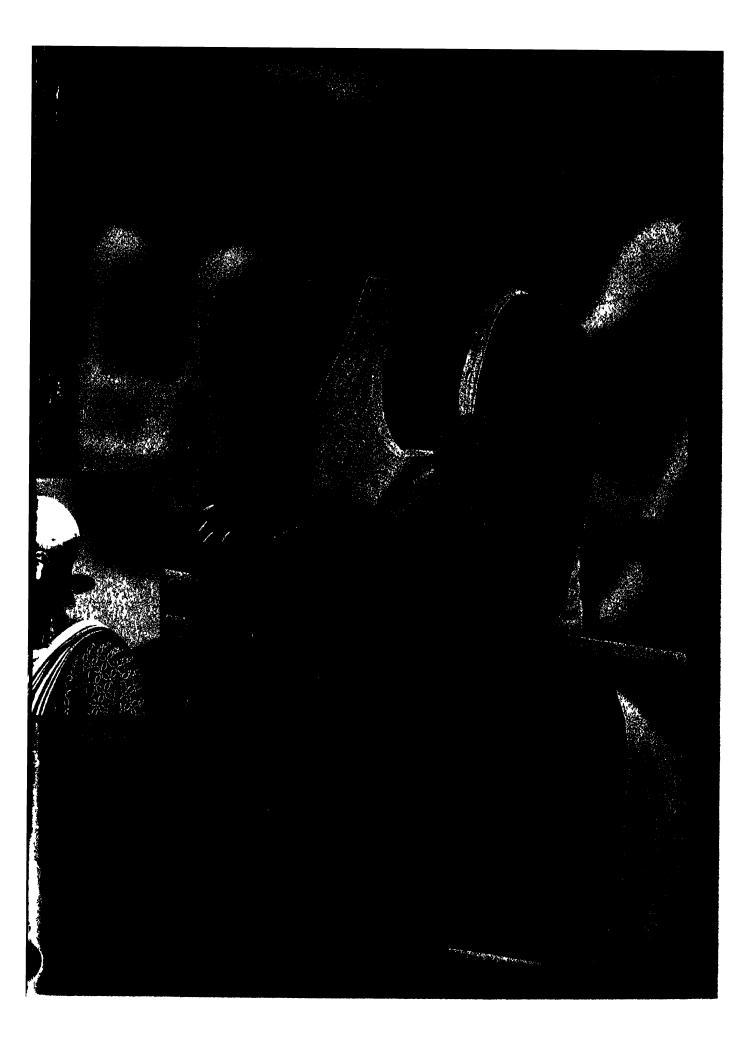




Top left: A South African with her baby daughter watches the national team perform in the 18th edition of the World Cup. But she returned home dejected as the team was eliminated. Above right: A not-so-fit fan takes a seat while waiting for the gates to open, while the Scotland fans (below) look a happy lot even though their country was eliminated in the first round. While one painted his face in national colours the other played his bagpiper









PLAYING FOR A NEW COUNTRY

The lure of the World Cup is so great that the players switch nationalities just to be able to participate in the world's greatest soccer tournament. In France 98, nearly thirty such players took part



HE trend of switching nationalities to play in the World Cup started in the Thirties when Mussolini forced several Argentinians who play

professional football in Italy to become Italian citizens so that they German midfielder Thomas Haessler (centre is challenged by US defender David Regis (right) and midfielder Chad Deering in a Gro F match



could play in the World Cup.

It was a successful venture as Italy won the World Cup in 1934 and 1938. Decades later, another Argentinian, the legendary Alfredo di Stefano, the messiah of Real Madrid, in the Fifties became a Spanish citizen and played in the 1962 World Cup at Chile. The USA in the 1950 World Cup were a team of expatriate Englishmen and Scotsmen along with a few Latinos. Most of them were rejected professionals but ironically they beat England 1-0, which had legends like Stanley Matthews, Stan Mortenson and Tom Finney in their side.

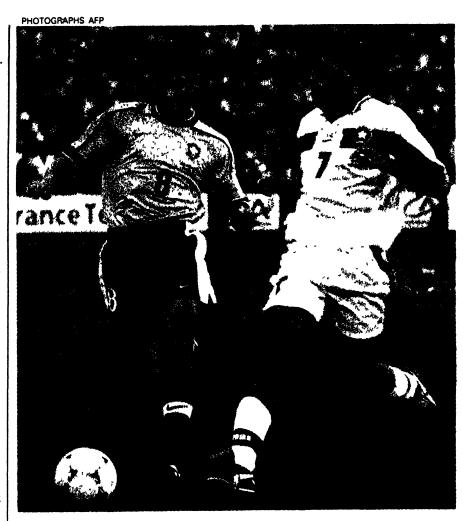
At France 98, there are nearly thirty players who have changed nationalities to play in the World Cup. There is a Brazilian playing for Tunisia, Japan and Belgium in France—a useful quiz question for the future. Birth, marriage and club careers were cited as reasons for the quick switch of nationalities.

Jamaica and the USA had the highest number of the foreign legion. Jamaica had seven-players who live in England and play in the English league but due to Jamaican parentage got a chance to compete in the greatest show on earth. The USA is, of course, known as the country of immigrants and so not surprisingly, they had five players in their squad who were born elsewhere and had different nationalities earlier in their life.

The glory of playing in the World Cup is sufficient incentive to switch loyalties/nationalities, unless you are very jingoistic. The choice for 28-year-old Fitzroy Simpson and 25-year-old striker Paul Hall of Portsmouth, a first division club (actually second division because the top 20 clubs are in the Premier League) in England was relatively simple.

They were both at a stage in their careers when international honours for the country of their birth, England was as remote as Jamaica winning the World Cup. So they took the plunge and got a chance to display their mettle in France 98.

However, Robbie Earle who scored Jamaica's first-ever World Cup goal, a



Brazilian captain Dunga (left) is challenged by Moroccan midfielder Moustafa El Hadji during their Group A match

firm header against Croatia, had already won three caps for England. For his club Wimbledon, he functions as a high quality midfielder. When he realised that he was not part of Glenn Hoddle's plans for France 98, he took advantage of his Jamaican parentage to join the 'Reggae Boyz'.

Due to his imposing height, Earle was used as a striker in the World Cup Finals along with 21-year-old Deon Burton, another import from England, who plays for Derby County in the Premier League.

Deon Burton's selection for Jamaica was a case of truth is stranger then fiction. He said, "I was on holiday in Jamaica and Paul Hall and Fitzroy Simpson my former teammates at Portsmouth were already training with the squad. They contacted me and

asked me if I fancied joining them. Before I knew it,I was in the starting eleven. I scored a few goals (four in five matches), played in the Rest of the World side against Europe and was voted Jamaican Sportsperson Of The Year ahead of Merlene Ottey and Courtney Walsh."

Burton, Simpson, Hall and Earle all played for Jamaica during their qualifiers. However, once they qualified for France 98, their Brazilian coach Rene Simoes became ambitious. He scoured the Premier League in England looking for more players of Jamaican background.

The experienced defender Frank Sinclair of Chelsea, bustling striker Marcus Gayle of Wimbledon, and midfielder Daryll Powell of Derby County were added to the squad. Initially, there was resentment by local players at the new 'imports' from England. The grouse of the local players and fans were that 'these

players had the option of coming from day one but did not. Why should they reap the glory now?

The commitment and attitude of these professionals from Britain won over the doubting Jonahs Jamaica's seven British expats all earn six figure salaries from their clubs in England However there was no highbrow attitude. They stayed in the same quarters as the rest of the squad, which was in a large mansion, and slept on mattresses on the floor.

They mingled easily with the local players who included goalkeeper Warren Barrett, a cashier in a beach side hotel, and the talented left back Ricardo Gardener who is a student Thus the seven British imports became part of the Reggae Boyz a team that entertained immensely at

Austrian player lvica Vastic (left) jubliates after scoring the last-minute equaliser against Chila

France 98 by their relaxed attitude both on and off the field.

However, the real Hamlet-like dilemma occurred for the talented roving Morrocan midfielder Mustafa Hadji. The skilful Morrocan who set the tournament alight with his electrifying and devastating goal against Norway on the opening day at Montpellier, happens to be a Frenchman.

Thirteen years ago Hadji's family migrated to France He grew up in Nancy, developed his football skills there and played for AS Nancy In his youth, he was a dynamic striker and live years ago was selected for the French under-21 team. At the same time, the Moroccan national coach while reading a French sports magazine, learnt about the precocious skills of Hadji, the Morrocan exile. The Morrocan authorities acted swiftly and contacted Hadji.

Now came the dilemma. Hadji had to choose between his adopted country and the country of his forefathers He knew no Arabic and spoke only in French However, what clinched the deal for Morocco was that Hadji thought that playing for the North African nation would give him a better chance to play in the World Cup So he turned down the invitation to play for France much to the chagrin of the French football authorities. He made his international debut for Morocco in the vital qualifier against Zambia at Casablanca ın '93

Hadji had the last laugh Morocco qualified for the '94 World Cup while France lost out Hadji played and impressed in Morocco's group stage league wins against Belgium, Saudi Arabia and Holland In '96, he moved from the second division club AS Nancy to Sporting Lisbon In



December '97, Hadji went to Spain. He now plys his trade with Deportiva La Coruna in the Spanish first division and has played two World Cups for Morocco in '94 and '98. He has played 45 times for his country and is now a pin-up hero in Morocco.

Hadji admits that there were difficulties initially. Moroccan journalists questioned his loyalties and many players were cold and reticent towards him. But his efforts on the field for Morocco changed that outlook and soon he became a cult figure.

In France 98, Hadji, with his lightning speed and close control was used in a roving, attacking, midfield role. His speed with the ball, the ability to drift into space, deft dribbling skills and a goal-scoring knack, made Hadji Morocco's outstanding player in the World Cup. Undoubtedly, Hadji has set a trend.

The talented 21-year-old forward Ali el Khattabi was born and brought up in Holland. Emulating Hadji's example, Khattabi also opted for Morocco, the country of his ancestors, instead of the country of his birth. He first played for Morocco last November in a friendly against Togo and then in the Nations Cup where he scored a sensational goal against Mozambique.

During this period, he has been desperately trying to learn Arabic so that he could communicate with his teammates. He got a chance as a substitute both against Brazil and Scotland in the group phase of France 98. However, he could not achieve his great ambition of swapping jersies with Romario who did not go to France because of a leg injury.

Brazilian expat Wagner Lopes made the pragmatic choice when he opted for Japan. It was a case of long-term planning. When the J-League was in its infancy in 1993, Lopes was one of the first few Brazilians to play there. Sensing the growing interest in the game there, Lopes made an intelligent decision. Realising that there was no dearth of talent in Brazil, his chances of an international career with his country was slim, so he sought



Dutch midfielder Clarence Seedorf (right) is challenged by Belgian forward Luis Oliveira during a Group E match

Japanese nationality.

The 29-year-old Lopes became a naturalised Japanese citizen last year. A steady striker who has a good eye for the goal, Lopes first appeared for his country against South Korea in a vital World Cup qualifier. Lopes who plays for Bellimare Hiratsuka in the J-League has at least played in the World Cup, something his more illustrious countrymen like midfielder Juninho (Athletico Madrid) who broke his leg and was not selected and striker Savio (Real Madrid) and Elber (Bayern Munich) have not achieved.

Lopes played as a roving, freewheeling striker and impressed with his distribution and ability to drift into scoring positions.

The 25-year-old Brazilian left back Jose Clayton played for Tunisia in France 98. As a teenager, his career was not taking off in Sao Paulo. An agent took him to the Tunisian club Etoile Sahel. For five years, he played digilently for his club. This season, he switched to Esperence.

Clayton did not play for Tunisia in the Cup qualifiers. His career was meandering along as a journeyman professional. In February '98, Tunisia gave a disappointing performance in the Africans Nations Cup in Burkina Faso. Tunisia's wily Polish coach Henryk Kasperczak wanted a change in personnel. He was impressed by Clayton's positional play and his Brazilian flair for overlapping. Pressure from the national football federation, enabled Clayton to get his Tunisian nationality in April '98. He made a pleasing international debut against Georgia and in France 98 played in all three group league matches for his country.

The far-sighted policies of the famous Belgian club, Anderlecht enabled bustling, speedy
Brazilian-born striker Airton Luis
Oliveira Barron to turn out for
Belgium in the 1998 World Cup.
Anderlecht has a policy of nurturing talent from Africa and other Third
World nations in their youth teams.
Luis Oliveira was invited to train with Anderlecht as a sixteen-year-old, from a Brazilian junior club way back in '85

I us Oliveira's tootball career thus took off in Belgium. Slowly he became enchanted with life in Belgium, and opted for Belgian nationality. He became a naturalised Belgian in '92 and he scored on his international



Jamaican forward Paul Hall (left) hugs teammate Robert Earle after the latter scored the 1-1 equalising goal against Croatia in a Group H match

debut against Tunisia that year. The next year he signed for Cagliare in Serie A and from 96 onwards has been playing along with Argentina's Gabriel Batistuta, for Fiorentina in Italy

Extremely fast and skilful I uis
Oliveira with six goals was Belgium's
top scorer in the qualifying rounds
His best match was a memorable
first half hattrick against Turkey in
front of a hostile crowd at Istanbul
which clinched Belgium's place in
France 98

Belgium's 1998 World Cup squad also had two other expats the talented brothers Lokaonda and Mbo Mpenza Both these talented players became Belgian citizens as their Zairean paients shifted to Brussels for work. The talented ball playing Mpenza started their career at a famous Belgian nursery club

Mouscron The current Belgian coach Georges Leekens was their initial club coach They are considered players of the future and have been brought to France for experience

Lokaond became 20 years old on July 4 and Mbo is 21. They did not get a chance in the World Cup as Belgium has many experienced forwards like Luc Nils. Marc Wilmorts. Gert. Clasessens and Luis Oliveira. The veteran of four World Cups. Enzo. Scifo was born in Belgium of Italian parents. However, he opted for Belgium, the country of his youth way back in 1986.

The Indomitable Lions of Cameroon also have three expatraite players 31-year old midfielder Jean Jacques Etame was born in Strasbourg in France and had French nationality Realising he could not get selected for France he opted for the country of his forefathers. He missed out on selection for USA 94 and made his international debut against England in November 1997. Now he has

achieved his dream of playing in a World Cup

Similarly 27 year old defender Romarin Billong was born in France and plays for St. Etienne. He also switched nationality to play in the World Cup. Right back Bertin Tockene was born in Chad but became a Cameroon national to fulfill his dream of playing in the World Cup.

Even a football superpower like Italy had a midfielder Roberto di Matteo who was born Swiss but because of Italian parents decided to switch allegiance. Unbelievably the proud Scots accepted an Englishman to tighten their defence. The 26 year old Matt Elliot who plays for Liecester City was born and brought up in England. The defender qualities through Scottish grandparentage but until his international call up had never even set foot in the country.

Roberto Acuna the best attacking midfielder for Paraguay was born in

Argentina Known as "El Toro" (the bull), for his fighting qualities he qualified for Paraguay as his parents are Paraguayan Midfielder Ivica Vastic who scored a dramatic injury-time equaliser for Austria against Chile in a group B league match is a Croat who came to play as a professional for Sturm Graz Due to his football skills, he was immediately selected for Austria after opting for Austrian nationality, two years ago

USA, the country of migrants, had lots of expats in their 1950 and 1994 World Cup squads and they have done it again. Talented forward Preki Radosavljevic was born in Belgrade and came to the USA to play indoor football as a professional. Impressed by his skills, the national coach Steve Sampson persuaded him to change his nationality.

The player with the best dribbling skills in the USA, midfielder Claudio Reyna was born in the USA of Argentinian parentage and wisely decided to opt for the country of his birth even though he plays as a professional for Wolfsburg in the Bundesliga (German League)

Speedy forward David Wagner is another German product who was given a US passport Midfielder Thomas Dooley is also a foreign legion recruit He has an American father, a soldier stationed in Germany by NATO Dooley was born and bred in Germany but his father's nationality enabled him to qualify for the USA He has over 75 caps for the USA and has played in two World Cups

Roy Wegerle, known for his creative skills, grew up in England. He played for Queens Park Rangers in the Premier League. However, he married an American and was offered citizenship. Wegerle was on the verge of selection for England. However, he opted for the USA because he thought international selection would be easier. Wegerle has now played in two World Cups.

However, the USA's most recent import was the French-born centre back David Regis who plays for German side Karlsruhe He was wooed by coach Sampson as he is COLORSPORT

Roy Wegerle, of English origin, opted to play for the USA as he felt that he had a better chance of being selected

married to an American. Regis, who can barely speak English, had to become a citizen to play in France. He was thus tutored by the coach and some of the players to pass an exam on his adopted country to qualify. Regis obtained his 'green card' just a month

before the kick off on June 10.

Why blame the players? Even amongst the 34 referees chosen by FIFA for France, there is one who switched allegiance Edward Lennie was born in Scotland, became a referee there but migrated to Australia He admits it was easier to get onto the FIFA panel from Down Under than from Scotland Such is the lure of the World Cup





THE KING Holds Court

RONALDO was the most sought-after player in the recent World Cup

(Below): Ronaldo signs a ball for an unidentified French fan after a morning training session

(Left): A French fan kisses Ronaldo, again after a training session. He has been the heartthrob of millions of young women around the globe

(Right): Russian tennis star Anna Kournikova (left) shows the V-sign as she sits with Ronaldo during a fourth round French Open singles match







WHERE FRANCE '98 EAGLES DARE

NIGERIA have provided the biggest surprise and drawn worldwide admiration for their superb play at France 98

AN ALEXY NAMED AND A STATE OF

HE legendary Pele and former England coach Walter Winterbottom had predicted that an African country will win the World Cup before the year 2000 Meanwhile, three-time African Footballer Of The Year Abedi Pele of Ghana says he does not believe that the continent will produce a World

Cup winner until the 2006 event

That year, if the wishes of newly elected FIFA president Sepp Blatter materialises, then an African country could stage the World Cup for the first time However whoever proves to be clairvoyant events in France 98 have revealed that from Africa Nigeria alone look capable of breaking Europe

Nigerian forward Daniel Amokachi battles for the ball with Bulgarian midfielder Ziatko Yankov during a Group D match and South America's hegemony in the World Cup

Prior to France 98, Nigeria's Supe Eagles were being written off as 25bets for the World Cup But after th showed remarkable stamina, self belief and rallying power to overcor Spain 3-2 and Bulgaria 1-0 the odd shortened to 16-1

In the match against Spain, the Super Eagles of Nigeria scored twice the last quarter to rally from a 1-2



Bulgarian defender Radostin Kischichev (r) is challenged by Nigerian midfielder Tijani Babangida. Nigeria stunned Bulgaria 1-0.

deficit and showed great fitness. In fact Manchester United's experienced manager Alex Ferguson feels very few teams can live with Nigeria in the closing stages of a match. Against Bulgaria, their defence showed the resilience to soak up the pressure and carve out a 1-0 win.

After their successive triumphs over Spain, one of the dark horses for the title, and Bulgaria, critics realised that Nigeria's 1996 Olympic gold medal in football was no flash in the pan.

It also broke the stereotype of African teams having just technically gifted players but with little discipline and limited tactical sense. It also showed how Nigeria had become a slick professional outfit and is now an emerging football super power.

The squad was as always brimming with individual talent but experts felt the defence was brittle and first choice goalkeeper Peter Rufai who plays for Deportive La Coruna in Spain was suspect during the high crosses. There were the usual problems of lack of preparation, poor administration and no agreement over bonus payments.

Star midfielder Sunday Oliseh, who turns out for Ajax Amsterdam said their ambition was to become the first African nation to reach the semi finals. Cameroon in Italia'90 were the first African nation to reach the World Cup quarter finals, losing 2-3 to England in extra time, in a memorable contest.

Four years ago at USA'94, Nigeria played with power and skill to lead mighty Italy 1-0 in a keenly fought second round encounter. Then Nigeria self-destructed. In defending their lead, they indulged in a series of niggling fouls, which gave Italy a plethora of free kicks and helped them regain their rhythm in attack.

Nigeria's lack of mental toughness was evident that day, as they committed over 25 fouls and allowed Italy to equalise in the last minute and Roberto Baggio, then sporting a pony-tail, scored an extra time match-winner.





The wealth of talent in the Nigerian team is amazing to behold. Their entire 22-member **World Cup squad plays** abroad. Third goalkeeper William Okpara is the only one from the African continent and even he plays for well known South African club **Orlando Pirates. Of the** remaining 21 players, 19 are from top European clubs including five in Spain, four each in France and Turkey and three in Holland



The carping critics had a field day. They suggested that Asian and African nations lacked the mental toughness and tactical know-how to achieve success in a month-long demanding, gruelling competition like the World Cup. Besides Nigeria, other Asian and African nations also succumbed to familiar failings in USA'94. South Korea scored twice to draw with Spain and drew 0-0 with Bolivia but indulged in needless petty fouls which spoilt their overall display. South Korea finished third in their group and could not progress. Saudi Arabia displayed silky individual skills to progress to the second round but were upset by Sweden's use of width and aerial attack to lose tamely. The Cameroon squad squabbled over bonus payments and gave a pusillanimous display on the field, losing 1-6 to Russia and 0-3 to Brazil in the group phase.

However France '98 showed that Nigeria has exorcised the ghosts of 1994 and is the first newly emerging nation to catch up with the superpowers of Europe and South America. Nigeria's 1994 World Cup squad also had many talented players

who played club football in Europe. So what is the difference between the squads of 1994 and 1998?

Skipper Uche Okechukwa answers, "We have learnt to channel our aggression into something constructive. We no longer concede ground by committing needless fouls." Above all they are brimming

Nigerian midfielder Victor Ikpeba is carried by enthusiastic teammates after scoring that decisive goal against Bulgaria with confidence. Historians will record that the turning point in Nigeria's football fortunes was that stunning comeback win over Brazil in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics semi final.

Brazil, with players of the calibre of Ronaldo, Bebeto, Juninho, Aldair and Roberto Carlos led Nigeria 3-1. But the Super Eagles displayed uncanny fitness, confidence and strength to level at 3-3 at full time and Nwankwo Kanu scored a wonderful 'golden goal' to take them to the final. In the

final against Argentina, they also rallied to win 3-2. These two historic wins enabled Nigeria to believe in themselves.

Powerful defender Taribo West. noted for his crunching tackles and who excelled for UEFA Cup champions Inter Milan this season said, "On skill and athleticism alone, we can probably beat all but six or seven teams in the World Cup." **Bustling forward Daniel Amokachi** who has played for Everton in England and now for Besiktas in Turkey is of the opinion that, "Nigeria fears no team. We have shed the underdog mentality. We do not lose the match in the dressing room. We feel we can match the best in the world. All of us play professional football for some of the leading clubs of the world and so we have faith in our abilities."

The wealth of talent in the Nigerian team is amazing to behold. Their entire 22-member World Cup squad plays abroad. Third goalkeeper William Okpara is the only one from the African continent and even he plays for well known South African club Orlando Pirates. Of the remaining 21 players, 19 are from top European clubs including five in Spain, four each in France and Turkey and three in Holland.

Defenders Ben Iroha and Uche Okafor play in Major League football in the USA. Playing in different countries has exposed the Nigerian players to an array of talent and has toughened them mentally. They are no longer in awe of the opposition. Also training with top professional clubs in the world has improved their fitness, tactical awareness and overall professionalism.

Another major factor for Nigeria's improved showing is their canny journeyman coach Bora Milutinovic. Leading his fourth team (earlier Mexico in 1986, Costa Rica in 1990 and the USA in 1994), Bora's immense experience and tactical acumen has enabled this highly talented Nigerian team to fulfil their potential.





Nigerian midfielder Jay-Jay Okacha (r) jumps with the ball as Bulgarian defender Gocho Guintchev looks on

Praising the contribution of the coach, Victor Ikpeba, the African Player Of The Year says, "He is helping us blend together and has convinced us of the advantages of being patient and disciplined." Patience and tactical discipline is what makes Nigeria of 1998 so devastating and different from the previous talented teams of this continent. Nigeria, unlike Cameroon or Morocco, look good going forward and are firm in defence. In contrast, Japan and South Korea looked solid in defence but not so penetrative moving up.

In the last couple of years, Nigeria has acquired a reputation like Germany of excelling in comebacks. Their innate self belief, supreme fitness and skills enable them to

attack relentlessly in the closing minutes of a match. Despite being a cohesive unit they still regale the spectators with their skills.

Austen, "Jay-Jay" Okacha is a conjurer in the midfield. He has the famous Puskas, "drag-back", deft body feints, a fascinating repertoire of dribbling skills, allied with uncanny distribution. His midfield partner Sunday Oliseh packs a powerful shot. Lithe but lethal striker Victor Ikpeba is very fluid, mobile and evades his marker with quick turns and running off the ball. Finidi George on the right, Lawal on the left and Daniel Amokachi can all dribble at speed. With their slick passes, body movements and agility, Nigeria have entertained and impressed by their power which has made them the favourite of the neutrals in France '98.

In these days of crass commercialism and agnosticism,

Nigeria's abiding faith in prayer should win them many friends amongst religious Indians. Nigeria's group prayer is an integral part of their training. Each player is allowed to chant a prayer either loudly or in silence.

Taribo West, the tough defender, chants in a slow rhythm, whereas Sunday Oliseh clears his mind of all thoughts and focusses on God. Some pray to Christ, some like Rashid Yekini to Allah but as Taribo West says, "Everybody believes in something. We pray for whatever we believe in. The important part is that it keeps us together, as a team and as a family."

With their new found patience, tactical discipline, mental strength allied to their inherent speed, strength and stamina along with their prayer meetings has helped forge a team spirit that has made Nigeria believe that they can conquer the world.



POSTCARDS FRANCE

Snippets and anecdotes from the World Cup '98



THE wily and experienced Spanish coach Javier Clemente said that there was nothing new in football. In terms of technique, he may be right. After all, in the last three decades, there has been little technical innovation, even at the greatest show of all, the World Cup.

The legendary Brazilian winger, Garrincha set the trend for the deceptively curving free kicks, from 1958 to 1966. Then in the 1974 World Cup, we witnessed the famous "Cruyff turn." Maradona's amazing dribbling in the 1986 World Cup was breathtaking, but not new. In France, a new trick with the ball, a new dribbling skill was witnessed. It was not done by some talented Brazilian. but by a little known Mexican winger, Cuauntemoc Blanco. When hemmed in by defenders near the touchline, he has the uncanny knack of wedging. the ball between his feet and leaping past a startled defender. The sheer ingenuity of this simple trick was a delight to behold.

Commentators struggled to describe this unprecedented, fancy dribbling. Former England coach Terry Venables called it the "Blanco leap" or "Blanco bubble." However, it has become famous as the "kangaroo leap" or "bunny hop" dribble because Blanco leapt like a startled kangaroo or bunny rabbit with the ball wedged between his feet to evade his markers.

RANCE 98 has revealed not only some new dribbling skills but some whacky, innovative football lingo. Football speak has unearthed

some new gems. Former Scottish international, Alan Hansen, working as an expert with the BBC, described the shaky, jittery Brazilian goalkeeper Taffarel, as a "dodge pot".

When Prosinecki scored Croatia's sensational second goal against Jamaica, Ron Atkinson, an experienced manager with the Premier League clubs in England and now an expert with ITV, felt it was accidental. He said, Prosinecki would be telling "porkies" (lies) if he claimed that he had aimed for the goal instead of an attempted cross High free kicks which were scrambled into the net, a speciality of Norway, were described by "Big Ron" as ugly balls or ugly goals.

JAMAICA'S Brazilian coach Rene Simoes is a man for all seasons, an inspirational coach, a philosopher, a computer wiz and is also deeply religious. He believes in playing good football and helps to spread the message of God. His favourite saying is "Faith moves mountains." His official team shirt is emblazoned with the message, "Jesus Saves." Jamaica were the only team with their own chaplain and he conducted services regularly for the squad.

Simoes is like South Africa's high-tech cricket coach, Bob Woolmer. He plans for matches with the help of a lap-top computer in which is stored, some statistical software, perfected by a friend, used to dissect their rival's game. With such technological aids, Simoes explains to his squad how to mark key players in the opposition like Croatians Davor

Suker and Robert Prosinecki and Argentinians Gabriel Batistuta and Ariel Ortega. This software told him which players fed the ball to Suker or Batistuta and from which direction.

Simoes went high-tech to glean information about important opposing players but it did not help his team much. Simoes the philosopher also has a theory that only countries which respond to music and dance can play quality football. He says Argentina has the Tango and Brazil the Salsa and this traditional fondness for music leads to an inherited rhythm, which leads to success in football.

The Germans do not follow any of these trendy training methods but by their overal efficiency they make other teams dance to their tune. Simoes' unique theory would probably falter in India, which despite a rich tradition in music and dance is below 100 in the FIFA rankings.

S URPRISE of surprises, Saudi
Arabia had the most experienced squad in France 98. Their 22-member squad had an average of 57 caps. Next was the USA with an average of 50 caps. England, Scotland and Yugoslavia had the most inexperienced squads with an average of 20 caps per player. The oldest team was Germany, with an average age of 30, while the youngest sides were Argentina, Jamaica, Japan, South Korea, Morocco and Nigeria whose squads averaged 26 years.

Many Brazilian players opted for the bald Ronaldo-look-alike hairstyles



Dennis Bergkamp's latest addiction is his mobile phone, and the two can seldom be separated

Listening to music and playing golf were the favourite modes of relaxation of many players in the World Cup The tastes in music varied. The English and Scottish players enjoyed dance music, techno and rap. The Nigerians and players from Cameroon loved percussion music.

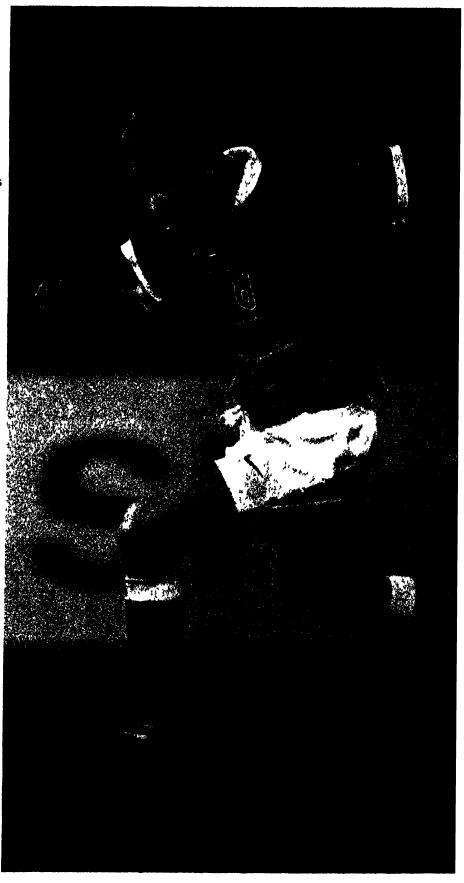
Another favourite companion, or, as some cynics say, business necessity, is the mobile telephone. In fact, England's goalkeeper David Seaman, midfielder Paul Ince and Holland striker Denis Bergkamp are addicted to their mobile phones. So the two faithful companions of the players are the Walkman or Discman and the mobile phone.

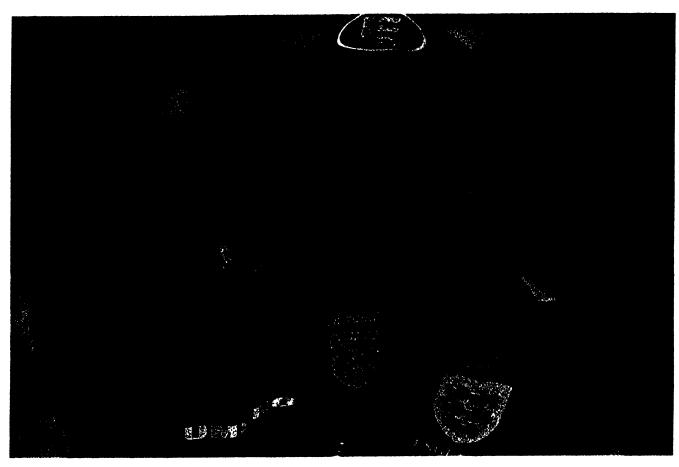
POR over a decade there has been a massive debate in India, whether to have a foreign coach or a home-based national coach. Interestingly at the 1998 World Cup, only nine of the 32 teams had coaches from abroad, eight of those were from the Third World or the newly-emerging nations in football.

Denmark is the only European nation to opt for a foreign coach. Sweden's Bo Johansson is the man in charge of the Danes. The only South American team with a foreign coach is the lesser known Paraguay They have the Brazilian Paulo Cesar Carpegiani as their national coach. Brazilians and Frenchmen are the coaches in demand.

At France 98, there are three Brazilians coaching foreign countries. Rene Simoes with Jamaica, Carlos Alberto Parreira with Saudi Arabia and Carpegiani with Paraguay. The trio of the French foreign legion are Claude Le Roy with Cameroon, Philippe Troussier with South Africa and Henri Michel with Morocco The Polish coach Henri Kasperczak was with Tunisia and the widely travelled Bora Milutinovic is with Nigeria.

Milutinovic and Parreira have appeared in their fourth World Cup Finals and each time with a new country. Milutinovic has coached





Violence and English fans always go together. France 98 provided us enough proof of it

Mexico in 1986, Costa Rica in 1990, hosts USA in 1994 and now Nigeria. Parreira was with Kuwait in 1982, UAE in 1990, champions Brazil in 1994 and was with Saudi Arabia. Parreira has won the World Cup with Brazil in 1994 but Milutinovic's best finish has been a quarter final berth in 1986 with Mexico.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE had said, "If music be the food of love, play on." Maybe it was this saying that prompted many coaches to use music to inspire their players in the 1998 World Cup. At their training camp at La Boule, England's coach Glenn Hoddle, had different background music, from rap to hard rock to dance music, as his players warmed up and exercised at practise sessions.

Aime Jacquet, the taciturn French

coach, made his players relax by listening to jazz music. Cameroon's French coach Claude Le Roy conducted practise sessions to the tune of the exotic "Djembe" music from Cameroon, whilst Brazilians trained to the complex rhythms of the "Samba". Of course, the most colourful music came from the "Reggae Boyz" of Jamaica who warmed up to the distinctive sound o Reggae.

Maybe India's national coach Syed Nayeemuddin should try the reverberating tunes of "bhangra" o "bhangra rap" to inspire the Indiar squad whilst training.

In the World Cup, some players ha weird hair-styles. However not in Argentina. Their coach Daniel Passarella is a strict disciplinarian. He has refused to pick players with long hair, or those who wore earrings or had homosexual preferences. Pasarella refused to compromise on principles and dropped ace playmaker

Fernando Redondo who plays for Real Madrid, as the latter refused to cut his hair. A quarrel between two strong-willed individuals.

Argentina was very popular in France and that was due to some excellent public relations by Passarella. At their team resort in L'Etrat, a satellite village of St. Etienne, a mini-homeland had been created by the local population of 4,000 people. They had decorated the village blue and white, Argentina's colours and made the players feel relaxed and comfortable.

ESPITE Michel Platini's fears, that in France there were only spectators and not supporters, there had been a lot of passionate support for their national team by French fans. Each win led to spontaneous dancing on the streets, the incessant blowing of horns and partying all night, but fortunately no violence. The violence was caused by English fans.

Jimmy Hill, BBC's experienced



Scotland's goalkeeper Jim Leighton (being comforted here by Brazilian keeper Taffarel) was the oldest player at France 98. He is 39

football pundit, had an interesting suggestion to curb the mindless jingoism of the neo-fascist English youth who went abroad as fans and misbehaved in foreign countries. He said, "as they give a bad name to English football, they should be put in jail for five years, for each violent offence." He felt this would be a sufficient deterrent.

Just as the tastes in music were varied, there have been some distinctive hair-styles at France 98. The Jamaicans had their dreadlocks.

The Brazilians set a new trend of appearing totally bald, the Yul Brynner hair cut, adopted by Ronaldo and Roberto Carlos Holland's towering defender Jap Staam who has been transferred to Manchester United for a whopping 10 million pounds, a world record for a defender, Italy's midfielder Luigi Di Biagio and Jamaica's striker Dion Burton were also seen sporting the bald-is-cool look

The ageing but talented Colombian captain Carlos Valderramma also stood out with his fuzzy hair-do.
Nigeria's talented play-maker Austin or Jay-Jay Okacha dyed his hair a bright orange. But the ultimate

hair-style of France 98 were the extensions of the fiercely competitive Nigerian defender, Taribo West. Like colourful ribbons he had strands of hair or strings attached to his hair. In Nigeria's first match with Spain, he wore green coloured extensions and changed his colours for each match.

E NGLAND'S Premier League is seemingly the best in the world as it attracts the best talent. There were more English-based players at this World Cup than from any other country. Sixteen of the 32 teams had players who plied their trade in the Premier League or the 1st Division in England.

Overall, there were 75
England-based players at France 98.
Spain and Italy were the next best
with 70. The England-based 75
players were distributed among the
competing nations as follows:
England 22, Norway 11, Scotland 8,
Jamaica 7, Holland 5, Denmark 4,
France 4, South Africa 3, Croatia 2,
Romania 2, USA 2, Austria 1,
Colombia 1, Germany 1, Italy 1 and
Nigena 1. Chelsea, Manchester
United and Tottenham Hotspur each
had eight players from their squads in
the 1998 World Cup

POLITICIANS basking in reflected glory is a common sight in any world sport. A lot of it was seen in France 98. Germany's highly respected Chancellor, Helmut Kohl visited the German training camp in France and extolled the players to give their best and bring glory to Germany. He spent time with each player and coach Bertie Vogts

England's charismatic Prime
Minister Tony Blair telephoned coach
Glenn Hoddle on the eve of their first
Group G match with Tunisia (England
won 2-0) to wish the squad the best of
luck and even discussed the playing XI
with Glenn Hoddle.

The Nigerian squad was told to excel to provide relief to the people of Nigeria grieving at the death of their President, General Abacha who died a few days before the start of France 98. Jamaica's Prime Minister, felt that a

good show in the World Cup would enhance Jamaica's image and tourism prospects.

However the ultimate political message was from the Romanian Prime Minister Radu Vasile. He put money on them to reach the semi-finals and has also promised to hand out bonuses to players for "good results."

THE oldest player in France 98 was Scotland's goalkeeper Jim Leighton, who plays for Aberdeen in the Scottish League and is 39 years old. Prior to this World Cup, Leighton Glenn Hoddle, the English coach, used different music from rap to hard rock to dance music during practise sessions to inspire his players

who has distinctive white paint over his eyebrows to prevent the perspiration from creeping in had played 85 times for Scotland.

The youngest player is from the "Simba Lions" of Cameroon, their precocious 17-year-old defender, Salomon Olembe. Young Salomon packs a ferocious shot and bristles with confidence. He is hailed as a future star and already plays for Nantes of France. Olembe has already set a unique world record. He is the youngest international ever to have played at the "Temple of Football," Wembley stadium, when he went to play against England in November 1997. He was just 16 years old then.

When Michael Owen of Liverpool,

the youngest player ever to score for England, came off the bench as a substitute against Tunisia at Marseille, he became the third youngest player ever to actually play in the World Cup. Owen is just 18 years old and is in illustrious company. Only the legendary Pele and Norman Whiteside of Northern Ireland have played in the World Cup Finals at a younger age. They were 17 years old when they made their debut.

JOHN COLLINS, Scotland's graceful playmaker has written a French-English book which serves as an introduction to France and a guide to fans attending France 98. Collins who plays for Monaco F.C. in France endeared himself to the fans by taking a crash course in French to speak the language with reasonable fluency. He is so popular in Monaco that a recently published dictionary has been named after him

THE most unforgettable and original quote of France 98 came from Jamaica's Brazilian coach Rene Simoes. Known as the 'Professor' he compared his team's chances to a fairy-tale. He said, "We are the Cinderella of the World Cup trying to postpone the midnight hour for as long as possible."

THE London borough of Brent used the World Cup mania, to deploy a novel way to collect tax arrears. To try and recoup some of its missing millions in council tax arrears, they sent out thousands of ultimatums and summons with the threat that if people did not pay then the bailiffs would be sent around to confiscate the television sets

TRAN adopted the most unusual method of preparing for their World Cup matches. The players underwent a three-hour religious ceremony, beating their chests and listening to fervent accounts of the sacrifices of Shite Muslims martyrs. This was supposed to inspire them to great glory in the matches ahead.





THE 'BULLDOG'

The Paraguayan goalkeeper-cum-captain JOSE LUIS CHILAVERT is the force driving his team

BY DHIMAN SARKAR

O occupied are they with the job of saving goals that scoring one from open play is not a thought that usually occurs to goalkeepers. Most would be shocked at such a suggestion. More so, in a competition like the World Cup.

It is not just because Jose Luis Chilavert loves shocking people that he cherishes such a dream. He has scored dozens of goals for club and country. Isn't it therefore natural to want one in the World Cup? If you are in sync with such logic you will also agree he has a point.

In one season with his Argentinian club Velez Sarsfield, Chilavert scored against Boca Juniors, River Plate and Olimpia. And in the World Cup qualifying campaign, it was his free-kick from 25 yards against Argentina that gave Paraguay a fresh lease of life. Photographers behind the Argentine goal that night in Buenos Aires swear they saw goalie Burgos tremble even as Chilavert readied for the free-kick. The ball curled past the

wall and slipped through his hands.

In these times of greenback-induced regimentation, Chilavert is an anathema. He follows his own rules, be it eating or 'keeping. With the stakes always getting higher, sport is no longer'something you just enjoy. The temptation to do it your way thus has to be resisted—willy nilly. It is a thought that would make generations of sportsmen cringe. Generations that threw up Nastase, McEnroe, Connors, Lillee, Botham and Best. Men who achieved so much without ever seeming to try.

Their ilk is dead. Now Sampras, Hingis, Pollock and Batistuta rule. All supremely gifted and very successful but who, more often than not, look like robots programmed to win.

Admiration for Diego Maradona stems from the fact that he was different. And wayward. He drank, womanised, snorted cocaine but still came up with sublime touches on the football field. Ditto for Paul Gascoigne and Romario. Gazza more than Romario was in the news for the wrong reasons. Yet Peter Shilton, Terry Venables and Bryan Robson

blasted Glenn Hoddle for keeping the Middlesbrough magician out. And most Brazilians are convinced Mario Zagallo should have retained Romario. It is the belief that despite obvious follies they can still dazzle that make them indispensable to these wise men. Adorable too, at least for some.

Ditto for Paraguayan captain Chilavert. Like Gazza, Romario and Maradona he is larger than life. Like them, he has been at loggerheads with the establishment. He has poured vitriol on everyone, from the Paraguayan President to national team coach Brazilian Paulo Cesar Carpegiani.

During the South American qualifiers, he spat at Colombian Faustino Asprilla and was banned for three matches. It was extended after he assaulted a rival team trainer. But Chilavert has a better sense of occasion than both Gazza and Romario.

Not every Paraguayan may like him but none can ignore him. So overwhelming is this 33-year-old goalie's influence on the team it

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prompted one hack to quip that he has psychic control over them. Another defined him as Paraguay's goalie/captain/set piece expert and national hero before adding he probably makes tea for them at half time too.

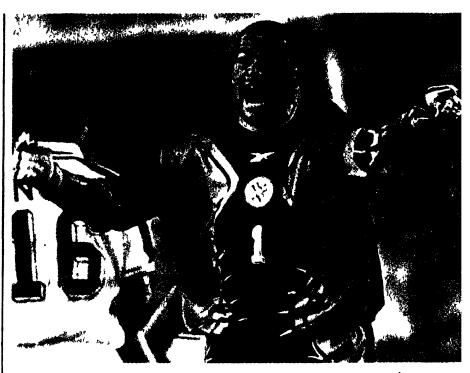
Chilavert is Paraguay's talisman, their totem pole. Not since the days of Maradona has a team rallied this much around a player: And that is as good as it gets. When he is not around, they looks rudderless.

From chiding them, as he did to two defenders during the Nigeria match, to warning them against exuberance when they were leading Chilavert pulls all the strings from behind. Statements like "if they want war, they will get war" (before the qualifier versus Ecuador) too go a long way in revving up team spirit. It also helps him live up to his 'Bulldog' tag

He celebrates in style too.
Remember his net grasping show of joy against Nigeria and a cool somersault after a goal. Chilavert is a showman who stands out in this era of television-induced hype.

Built like an oak-tree, this 6 ft 1 in, 81kg athlete has excellent sense of position, anticipation and an abundance of self-confidence. Against Bulgaria, in Paraguay's opening match, he kept out a Trifon Ivanov free-kick—the Balkan captain packs so much power into his shots that no distance, it is said, is too long for him—and then curled one himself which counterpart Zrdavkov tipped over

Against the marauding Spaniards



Chilavert kept out the dangerous Raul Gonzalez's close-range effort with agility that belied his huge frame. Spain may have had a titanic end to their dreams but then you need to take your chances to survive. Paraguay then whipped a disinterested Nigeria—Chilavert conceded his first goal in that match—and finished second in their group. But for him and Denmark's Peter Schmeichel, goalkeeping has been fairly ordinary in this World Cup's first round.

A safe pair of hands is what the doctor ordered for a team which bases its game on organised defending and then looks for quick breakaways.

Gamarra, Ayala and Arce are the defensive kingpins with Beniter, who created quite a flutter against Spain, and Rojas the most likely goalgetters in their 3-5-2 format. Don't therefore look for too many goals from his team—Paraguay won only two of their qualifying matches by more than one-goal—but count on it to put up a fight. Ask France.

Chilavert continues the tradition of extraordinary goalkeepers from the continent of Jose Rene Higuita. The Colombian committed hara kiri in Italy eight years ago. There is no saying whether Chilavert will go Higuita's way but Paraguayans are willing to take the risk.

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WORLD CLASS LUBRICANTS.





HOW DID ASIA PERFORM?

An analysis of the performances of SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN, SAUDI ARABIA and IRAN



IRAN

Iran kept Asian eyes smiling and were the most tactically accomplished of the four Asian countries. Iran beat political rivals USA 2-1 in a needle Group F encounter, narrowly lost 0-1 to Yugoslavia (a well placed free kick by Sinisa Mihajlovic did the damage) and lost to Germany 0-2 after holding the thrice former champions goalless till the 50th minute.

Despite chopping and changing three coaches in six months, Iran has

Iran performed the best among the Asian nations. Picture shows the action in the Group F match between Yugoslavia and Iran which the former won 1-0

greatly benefitted from the experience of their 'foreign legion'. Three key players, striker Ali Daei and midfielders Karim Bagheri and Khodad Azizi play in the German Bundesliga. Daei, now sought by Bayern Munich and Bagheri last season turned out for Arminia Bielefeld while Azizi played for Koln. However, their most versatile player was 20-year-old Mehdi Mahdavakia, one of the finds of the World Cup.

He was a quick, all-action midfielder-cum-winger with Pirouzi club who troubled even the Germans and Yugoslavs with his speedy, attacking forays. His speed, strength, measured crosses from the flanks and composure in the box was of the highest class. His amazing run from the halfway line and cool finish for the match-winner against USA was brilliant. Mahdavakia so impressed the talent scouts that he received offers from clubs in Spain, Italy and Germany. Bagheri who scored a staggering 17 goals in the qualifying stages impressed as a defensive midfielder who quickly broke into attack. Azizi, twice former Asian Player Of The Year had the confidence to run at defenders and cause them trouble. Burly and tall Nader Mohammedkhani was a tower of strength in defence with his timely tackles and soundness in aerial duels.

Strength in defence, sound tackling, a well-organised midfield and the speed of their counter-attacks were the hallmarks of Iran's game. Due to the international experience of Azizi, Daei and Bagheri, Iran showed more variety in attack than any of the Asian nations. Also, they coped with the physical aspect of football better than the other Asian nations.

If Iran can maintain the same pace of development, it is a good augury for Asian football. Their players, like the Nigerians, are willing to travel abroad and play in competitive leagues which provide invaluable experience and mental toughness.

JAPAN

Japan, in their first-ever World Cup performed much more creditably, harassing both Argentina and Croatia before narrowly losing 0-1 in both matches. In fact, Croatia's match winner by Davor Suker was scored only in the 75th minute. Argentina's match-winner by superstar Gabriel Batistuta came off a lucky deflection. In their last league match, Japan was expected to beat Jamaica but the Reggae Boyz triumphed 2-1.

The collective mobility of Japan was impressive. They opted for a back three system with Ihara as a libero and relied on quick counter attacks. Their solid organisation enabled them to hold off the pressure and compensated for the lack of creativity upfront.

Their 21-year-old red-haired midfielder Hidetoshi Nakata, the Asian Player Of The Year displayed excellent vision, passing and possession skills. Nakata who has already written his autobiography, has attracted the attention of several European clubs. Nakata who is 5ft. 10in. tall and weighs 72 kgs at present plays for 'Bellmare Hiratsuka'. In 25 matches for Japan, he has scored nine goals and at France '98, he was their main playmaker. He also starred in Japan's memorable 1-0 win over Brazil in a league match in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Other Japanese players to impress were attacking left back Naoki Soma, stopper back Masami Ihara, midfielder Motohiro Yarnaguchi and Nakayama of 'Jubilo Iwato' who scored Japan's first and only goal of the World Cup.

The way Japan hustled Argentine playmaker Ariel Ortega and Croatia's Robert Prosenecki off the ball was impressive.

Teamwork, spirit, pace, and stubborn refusal to accept defeat were the main aspects of Japan's display in France, '98. They also moved the ball well out of defence. However, it was in the final third, that they lacked 'penetrative passes. With more international experience, they could develop this aspect of their game.



South Korea in five World Cup appearances has never won a match. Picture shows Do Hoon Kim of South Korea in an aerial tussle with Claudio Suarez of Mexico. Mexico won 3-1

The advantage of playing against accomplished European and South American players in the J-League has ensured the rapid improvement of Japanese players. Coach Takeshi Okada admits, "Mentally, our players are much more professional now, thanks to the J League and the experience of the Asian qualifiers."

Osvaldo Ardilles, the brilliant Argentine midfielder (who won a World Cup winner's medal in 1978) is now coaching in Japan. He said, "In ten years, look out for Japan. They will be the best in Asia and a force to reckon with."

Former England coach Terry
Venables was also impressed with
Japan's debut and felt that if they
showed greater variety in attack,
could be dangerous. He also felt that
Japan coped with the physical aspect
of football quite capably and their
ability to run into attacking positions
from the blind side was good.

SOUTH KOREA

South Korea, which has the best record in qualification amongst Asian nations, sacked coach Cha Bum-kun after the humiliating 0-5 loss to Holland. Cha had taken over as national coach in January 1997, after a disastrous Asia Cup under Park Jong-Hwan.

A disciplinarian, Cha favoured the German tactical system of 3-5-2. He developed a new-look Korean squad, drawn from the most promising players of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and the 1994 World Cup squad. He was not hesitant to experiment and introduced 18-year-old Ko Jong-So to the squad. Ko was the great new hope of Korean football. He made history when he first played for his country in January 1997 against Norway by being the youngest Korean international. He also banked on the proven prowess of striker Seo Jung-Won who plays for Strasbourg in the French League and left footed playmaker cum free kick specialist Ha

Seouk-Ma.

Sadly for the coach, all his key players flopped. Seo Jung-Won and Ko did not play upto expectations. Defender Hong Myong Bo, considered the best Korean player of his generation, was also exposed against Holland. Ha Seok-Ju after scoring with a memorable, free kick against Mexico was shown the red card within the next two minutes. The Koreans never recovered from this setback, lost their composure and were outwitted by the crafty Mexicans who used the width of the field to take advantage of their numerical superiority. Mexico brought on an extra attacker to score thrice in the second half and win 3-1.

Similarly, South Korea matched the talented Dutch till 38 minutes, but then caved in to the sustained brilliance of Holland's attacking play to lose 0-5. The Korean defence showed familiar failings, fraility in the air and naivety in the defence organisation.

The Korean coach got criticised for playing in the German system of 3-5-2. But it was this system which had got Korea through to the World Cup finals. When they reverted to the flat back four, against Belgium under the tutelage of new coach Kim Pyun-Seok, they appeared more comfortable and managed a 1-1 draw. It was once again a case of two setbacks, causing rumbling in the ranks, dissatisfaction and later dismissal of the coach.

South Korea's preparation had been quite meticulous. They had travelled to Europe and played several friendlies. Yet, for all their speed, fitness, renowned fighting spirit and sustained success in Asian football, they remain an enigma in the World Cup. They have never fulfilled their potential in the World Cup and after their fifth World Cup campaign, are still in search of their first win.

Besides this inability, South Korea's biggest disappointment was not gaining respect in France. Pacy striker Seo Jung-Won said, "We host the next World Cup and it is essential that we leave a positive impression about



South Korean football." However, to the dismay of their players, fans and coaches, the only impression left behind of Korean football was that they were worthy triers but little else.

SAUDI ARABIA

In France '98, the biggest disappointment was Saudi Arabia. They came with great expectations, a seasoned Brazilian coach Alberto Carlos Parreira, a niggardly defence, and a reputation of being the 'Germany of Asia'.

Also, there was the confidence of two wins in USA '94. However, this time, the Saudis came crashing down to earth. In Group C, they lost 0-1 to Denmark, 0-4 to France and held South Africa to a 2-2 draw. The free-flowing attacking skills and languid style, slow build ups and sudden acceleration seen in Saudi Arabia's play, four years ago, was missing.

They were ultra-defensive. 25-year-old striker Sami-al-Jaber rated as one of Asia's most The biggest disappointment among the Asian nations was Saudi Arabia. They failed to live up to their reputation of being the 'Germany of Asia'

accomplished forwards and Saeed Al-Owairan, known as the 'Desert Maradona', disappointed. Goalkeeper Mohammed Al-Deayea, also considered one of the best in Asia, was weak against crosses.

Their defensive tactics kept Denmark at bay till midway through the second half. France was also contained well in the initial quarter of the game. However, once Mohammed Al-Khlawı was shown the red card, somewhat harshly, in the 20th minute, Saudi Arabia just capitulated. They did not show the 'German mentality', of being able to fight against all odds. Talented defenders like left back Hussein Sulaimani, stopper Ahmed Jamil Madani and right back Mohammed Al-Jahani belied expectations. It seemed that the Saudi players were unhappy with Carlos Alberto Parreira's tight defensive formation.

There was also constant

interference by the Saudi Football Federation and the royal family who are avid supporters of the game. After the 0-4 loss to France, an emergency meeting was held in Paris at which it was decided to cancel Parreira's contract with immediate effect. No reason was cited but it was widely felt that Carlos Alberto Parreira who led his country to World Cup triumph in the United States in 1994 was made a scapegoat for Saudi Arabia's lack of success

Thus, for the last Group C league match vs South Africa, he was replaced by a Saudi Arabian, Mohammed Al-Kharashi, the 10th Saudi coach in the last three years. A bitter Parreira lashed out and said, "This is not the way to build a team to be very successful."

Such over-reaction, muddled thinking and constant interference by National Federations is not helping in the development of Asian football. After Saudi Arabia, it was South Korea's turn to dump their coach after two successive defeats.

Novy Kapadia, France



SEEING RED

Referees have stringently applied the red card for tackles from behind. Is this good or bad for football?

CONTRACTOR OF THE STATE OF

NCREASING the size of the 16th World Cup from 24 to 32 countries intensified the sense of an international carnival.

Meanwhile, FIFA, in their wisdom and desire to make the last World Cup of the 20th century, an unforgettable tournament, decided to ban the tackle from behind. This decision was taken by the International Board, which decides on all the rules governing football. FIFA fully endorsed the decision.

Sepp Blatter, the newly elected FIFA president in a press conference at Paris justified the new ruling by citing medical evidence. He said that, "A FIFA study showed that 60 per cent of injuries suffered by players are ankle or Achilles heel injuries which usually result from tackles from behind. Marco Van Basten had to end his career when he was only 28 or 29 because he had been the victim of too many violent tackles. We don't want to see such a thing happen again." Blatter's views were supported by the French coach Aime Jacquet and the German coach Bertie Vogts.

The consequence of this new ruling was massive apprehension in the minds of the players prior to the commencement of the tournament. Many of the participating nations asked their World Cup nominated referees to instruct the players on the new legislation on the tackle from behind.

England, for instance, invited their World Cup referee Paul Durkin for special sessions at both their training headquarters Bisham Abbey outside London and at La Boule in France. Durkin showed the players' FIFA's special video in which tackles in

previous matches which only got a yellow card would now be deemed a red card offence.

Teddy Sheringham, England's striker aptly summed up the feelings of the players when he said that, "Paul Durkin put the fear of God into us when he refereed us at Bisham before the tournament. He told us how the refs would be very strict."

In the initial matches, it was obvious that the players were cautious. It was noticeable that when, for instance, Ronaldo, Denilson and Cafu were running with the ball, defenders held off them. Sliding tackles were at a minimum. The fear factor made it a more attacking World Cup in the initial phase.

For the first time in three decades there were three goals in the opening match, when Brazil beat Scotland 2-1 in a group A match and, on the same day, Norway and Morocco drew 2-2. Former England manager Bobby Robson aptly remarked on TV that, "the fact that players think they can get sent off for something silly has led to self-restraint."

However, despite the fears of the players, the referees showed remarkable presence of mind and restraint. There was not the predicted plethora of yellow and red cards after the first week of play. After a week of matches there were 62 bookings and three red cards in 18 matches, the same average as the major leagues in Europe.

Of the dismissals, Anatoli Nankov of Bulgaria received two yellow cards, both of which were for quite serious fouls against Paraguay. Nankov felt the second booking was for a harmless tackle but the Saudi Arabian referee A. Rahman Al Zeld rightly interpreted it as a tackle from behind.

Holland's burly striker Patrick,

Kluivert was harshly treated, sent off for pushing Lorenzo Stalens of Belgium with his elbow. Later it transpired that Kluivert reacted strongly because Stalens made some derogatory personal remarks and called him a rapist.

Kluivert had been accused and acquitted of rape in Amsterdam. The referee Pierluigi Collina of Italy can be excused for this lapse as it is not possible for him to hear all the remarks that are exchanged in the game. However Stalen's histrionic over-reaction led to Kluivert's dismissal and subsequent suspension for the next two league matches.

Stalen fell clutching his face as if pole-axed when he had just been nudged in the chest by an enraged Kluivert. This was an off the ball incident and Collina consulted his assistant Emmanuel Zammit of Malta who indicated that Kluivert had used his elbow.

Maybe, if the officials had recourse to football's equivalent of a 'Third Eye', they would have realised that Stalens had delibertately over-reacted and should have been booked for feigning injury. South Korea's Ha Seok-Ju got sent off for a tackle from behind against Mexico. Again, it was a case of the Austrian referee Gunter Benko strictly applying the FIFA guidelines on the clampdown on the tackle from behind.

The overall standard of supervision had been quite good. There were some excellent decisions and co-ordination between the referee and the assistant referees. For instance in the group B league game between Chile and Austria, Marcelo Salas'

Seok Ju Ha, the South Korean goal scorer against Mexice is being shown the red card for a harsh tackle on a Mexican player

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second attempted header was saved by the Austrian goalkeeper Michael Konsel who dragged the ball narrowly acoss the line. TV replays showed the ball had just gone across.

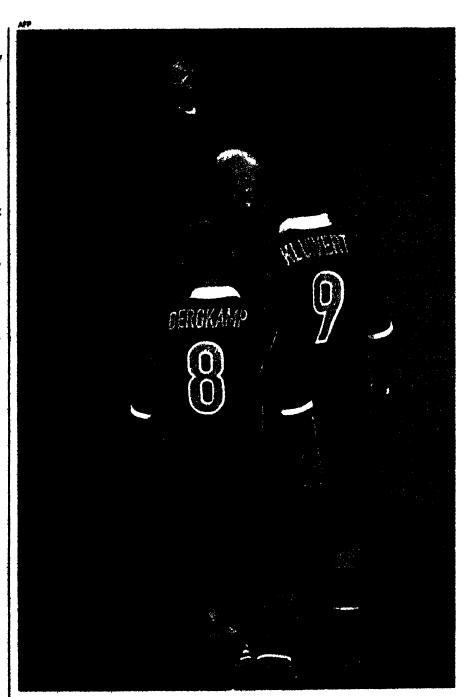
It was a close call, but after a quick nod of approval from his assistant referee, the Aussie referee Edward Lennie signalled for the goal. In the cracking match between Spain and Nigeria in which the 1996 Olympic champions Nigeria won 3-2, the American referee Esfandiar Bahamast frequently applied the advantage rule which led to a free-flowing display of enthralling, attacking football.

Yet there were some inconsistencies. For instance, Massayoshi Okada of Japan was quite lenient in penalising the Tunisians who indulged in a lot of nudging from behind, shirt-tugging and body obstruction in their 0-2 loss to England.

The most glaring error was by the Russian referee Nikolai Levinkov in the Brazil vs Morocco match. Prustrated at Brazil's overwhelming superiority, the Moroccan defender Said Chibba planted his studs onto Ronaldo's thighs, very near his groin. The Brazilian superstar writhed in agony. However referee Levinkov allowed Chibba to walk away scot-free without even a yellow card. Italy got a fortuitous penalty kick equaliser against Chile in their 2-2 draw. However that was a case of interpretation of the incident.

Then Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini stirred a hornet's nest by their stern warning to referees who were not enforcing the clampdown on the tackle from behind. Blatter talked in draconian terms about sending referees back home if there was no crackdown on players who tackled from behind.

Confusion reigned on the pitch, after this harsh warning. Referees got ultra-cautious. The day after FIFA's ultimatum, five red cards were dished out in just two matches. Some felt it was a case of poetic justice. Platini had supported Blatter's ples for stricter interpretation of the law and on the same night, the great French star



Durch ferward Patrick Kinivert is shown the rad card in the match against Belgins. He was headed durin a few-match suspension

Zinedine Zidane, was shown the red card by the Mexican referee Arturo Brizio Carter for a foul against a Saudi Arabian player in a group C league match.

In the same match, Carter dismissed a Saudi Arabian stopper-back.
Mohammed Al-Khilaiwi, almost at if to appease the MFA bostes' concern for fatiplay: Al-Khilaiwi attition an

overlapping left-back Lizarazu near the corner flag. His outstretched foot caught the boot of the speedy Lizarazu, who stumbled in the process. It was no way an intentional foul and certainly not a malicious one. By this dismissal, the match as a contest was over-Saudi Arabia were reduced to ten men in the 20th minute.

Previously, referees always used common sense. But this approach has been swept away by FIFA's rigid insistence on applying the letter of the law. This does not bode well for the future of football. Some commentators were apprehensive that football would go the way of basketball, where any contact at all is frowned upon, and often penalised.

The whole nature of an inherently physical game could be changed and, in doing so, could lose an integral part of its appeal. Football without contact is like love without passion. Some of the great tacklers of the past like current Argentine manager Daniel Passarella, Hans Peter Briegel of Germany, Claudio Gentile and Marco Tardelli of Italy's 1982 World Cup winning team would have been handicapped by such a ruling and been much less effective.

On the other hand, excessively harsh and dangerous tackles should be regularly penalised. In addition, neither should those guilty of such offences be glorified in the manner of Chelsea's 70s defender, "Chopper" Harris or, more recently, ex-Wimbledon "hard-man" Vinnie Jones who even has a video of his worst tackles. The macho image of football should not extend to celebrating dangerous play but the physical aspect of the game cannot be denied.

In some cases, football matches became like a hockey match with constant whistling and hold-ups. The Colombian referee John Jairo Toro Rendon made the second half of the group C league match between Denmark and South Africa farcical by his over-zealous interpretation of the rule-book. He sent off two Danes and a South African for what seemed like minor offences. In the process he became the first referee in 44 years in the World Cup to send off three players from the field.

Also, as former Engiand coach and ITV expert Terry Venables said, "John Rendon seemed gleeful in the way he rushed to show the red cards." Ironically it was not a dirty, ill-tempered match peppered with niggling fouls. Denmark committed only eight fouls in the whole match, from which they were shown the red and four yellow cards—a sensational

statistic.

What is worse, the whistle-happy Rendon sowed the seeds of doubt and confusion in the minds of the players. Players became hesitant to tackle. As one of the commentators remarked, it was like watching "playground football."

What is equally dangerous is that players from both teams have started indulging in histrionics to get an opponent booked. The Danes felt that the massive South African stopper Lucas Radebe over-reacted to a tackle in order to get Denmark's forward Miklos Molnar expelled from the ground.

Similarly, later in the match, Radede was shown the yellow card for a lunging tackle on Brian Laudrup

FIFA wanted to eliminate the destructive image of football, bring back the glory of attacking play to the fore-front, let the dribblers run riot. Hence the decision to ban the tackle from behind

which left the latter crumbling in a heap to the floor. Radede felt that Brian Laudrup had exaggerated the impact of the tackle and injury, to force the referee to flash a yellow card. This is a dangerous trend as matches can deteriorate if players use histrionic skills to influence the referee and settle minor feuds.

There is a historical perspective to this decision of clamping down on the tackle from behind. The ultra-defensive tactics and low scoring at Italia'90 (both sem) that decided via the penalty theor out; alerted FIPA to the dangers of excessively defensive football. The goal scoring average at Italia '90 was just \$-18, the lowest in the history of the World Gup.

The PIPA bigwigs felt that if this trend continued, future generations would get dislitutioned with lootball, with all the financial implications that this entails. Pootball in the 90s is a business and it is as much about money as anything else.

An important decision was taken after the 1990 World Cup, if a defender used his feet to pass the ball back to the goalkeeper, the latter could not use his hands to collect the ball. He would have to kick it like any outfield player. This rule certainly quickened play.

For the 1994 World Cup, FIFA introduced another rule. If an attacking player was parallel with the last defender he was not off-side. Also, if an attacker was brought down while on his way to goal, then the defender could be given to the red card. These three rules certainly increased the attacking tempo of international football.

However, still many key forwards like the legendary Dutch striker Marco Van Basten were prematurely retiring from the game due to ankle injuries inflicted by savage tackles from behind by defenders. In fact. Van Basten is so disenchanted by the injuries he has suffered from football that he has cut himself off from the game. FIFA even invited Van Bastento attend a conference and share his views on the tackle from behind but got a curt refusal. Dribbling, which is the most enchanting skill in football was becoming scarce. Modern football was becoming all about work-rate and patient possession and build-ups. FIFA wanted to eliminate the destructive image of football, bring back the glory of attacking play to the fore-front, let the dribblers run riot. Hence the decision to ban the tackle from behind.

From '98 onwards, the automatic punishment for a tackle from behind is the red card no matter where the offence may have lifen committed on the pitch. Some of these changes have been beneficial and have speeded up the game but disallowing any tackle from behind devalues the art of defaultits.





The second secon





freewheeling

NSTEAD of a series of nuclear blasts, if we had produced a team of the calibre of Nigeria, we would have won the world's appreciation. Instead, we are now left facing the world's condemnation.

Nigeria, despite having a brutal military dictatorship, received universal kudos for their display against Bulgaria.

Increasingly, it is through sport that countries shape their image on the international stage. What is Brazil without its footballing genius? It is nothing but a Third World country which has treated its native Indian population of the Amazon region with unmitigated brutality. But who knows or cares about that? Or what was Argentina without Maradona?

Before the advent of the soccer maestro, Argentina had a very negative image. A military junta had forcibly taken power in 1976 and killed thousands of its own people over several years. Then Maradona came along, to excite and inspire his country (the junta was overthrown) as well as the world.

The World Cup is the greatest sporting event of them all. However, India is nowhere on the Asian football scene, let alone the world. But this has not prevented millions of our countrymen, including myself to still think we are a great country. Sadly, the grandeur exists only in our minds and has no basis in reality.

When we see those immeasurably high standards set in the World Cup, we can only laugh with derision at our Bhaichungs and Vijayans, strutting about on our national stage. The harsh fact: they have no international reputation whatsoever. They are simply Big Fishes in a small pond.

The puzzle is this: how come they seem so satisfied in playing in the IFA Shield, the Philips National League and the SAF Games where the standards are so abysmal. Don't they ever get a desire to test their skills against superior opposition?

Most of the players in the African teams play in the European leagues. If they can play there, why can't Bhaichung and Vijayan? Is it that

impossible for our players to get a look-in?

If they think Europe is a hard nut to crack, why can't they try the Asian leagues? The J-League in Japan could be worth an attempt. There are also lucrative and highly competitive leagues in Malaysia and Singapore.

An exposure abroad will change the mind-set of our players. They could learn the latest methods of playing and training. This will reduce their dependence on creatively stagnant talking heads like P.K. Banerjee and Amal Dutta, whose only exposure to top class international football at present is by watching TV. Yet that does not prevent them from



Bhaichung Bhutia: Big Fish in a small pond

pontificating in the media about what is wrong with this European team or that South American team. The added incentive for our footballers is that if they make a mark abroad, they can earn in lakhs of dollars, in the manner of Leander Paes, instead of in rupees as they are doing now.

As for us Indian fans, we were left rooting for African, Asian and Latin American teams like Nigeria, Cameroon, Tunisia, Morocco, Iran, Japan, South Korea, Paraguay, Chile, Brazil and the like.

This World Cup has clearly shown that the gap between the footballing powers and the rest is narrowing fast. It is a matter of time before the whites are overtaken. Assirts, there are so many chacks playing for the European

teams). The next century, footballing-wise, could well belong to Latin America and Asia. Will India be counted as a power then?

The bomb, despite the deafening shouts of jingoism it produced, has not hidden one singular fact: we are a horribly mediocre nation with no world class standards in any discipline, including sports, V. Anand notwithstanding.

Can we have a mental and social revolution? Can we Indians make an impact at a future World Cup? Can we go to a tournament and wave our Indian flag without people coming up and asking, with a perplexed frown, to which country we belong to.

Can we have a coach sitting on the sidelines at a World Cup football match instead of lounging around in a multi-coloured *lungi* and white banian on a sofa in his house, thousands of kilometres away from the scene of action, watching the game goggle-eyed on TV and acting like a grey eminence?

Will there come a time when the nation will put out a red carpet welcome for a magnificent performance by our football team till the QUARTER FINALS of the World Cup. It sounds like a crazy dream, isn't it?

In the current national mood of futility and despair (and very high prices), nothing is possible.

Everything is in a mess. Our politicians play with fire and everybody suffers as a result. So when one talks of making an impact at the World Cup, acquaintances shake their heads and point their finger at the side of their foreheads, turning it around in the manner of a drill, and say that I am a little cracked and am living in a fantasy world of my own.

Which is, of course, true. Maybe, not the cracked but definitely the fantasy part. As a friend stated matter-of-factly, "Nothing is going to happen in our lifetimes. So save your breath and let's go to 'Baskin Robbins', check out the chicks and have an ice cream. It might cool down your brain a bit!"

Shevlin Sebastian

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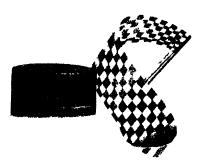
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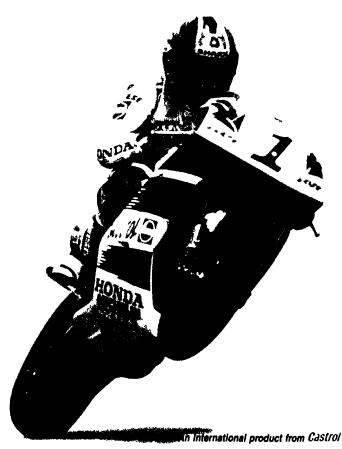
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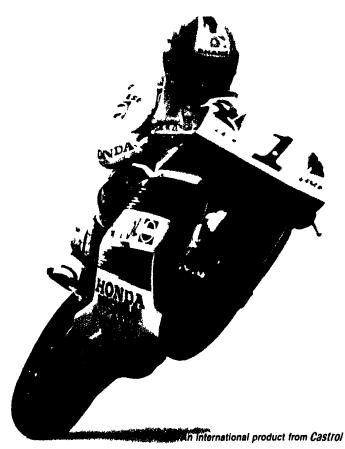
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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF SYED KIRMANI

Editor: Mansur Alı Khan Pataudı

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF RONALDO BY AFP

Despite rain almost wrecking the tournament, India wins the Singer-Akai Nidahas Trophy in Sri Lanka

MONSO MAYHEI





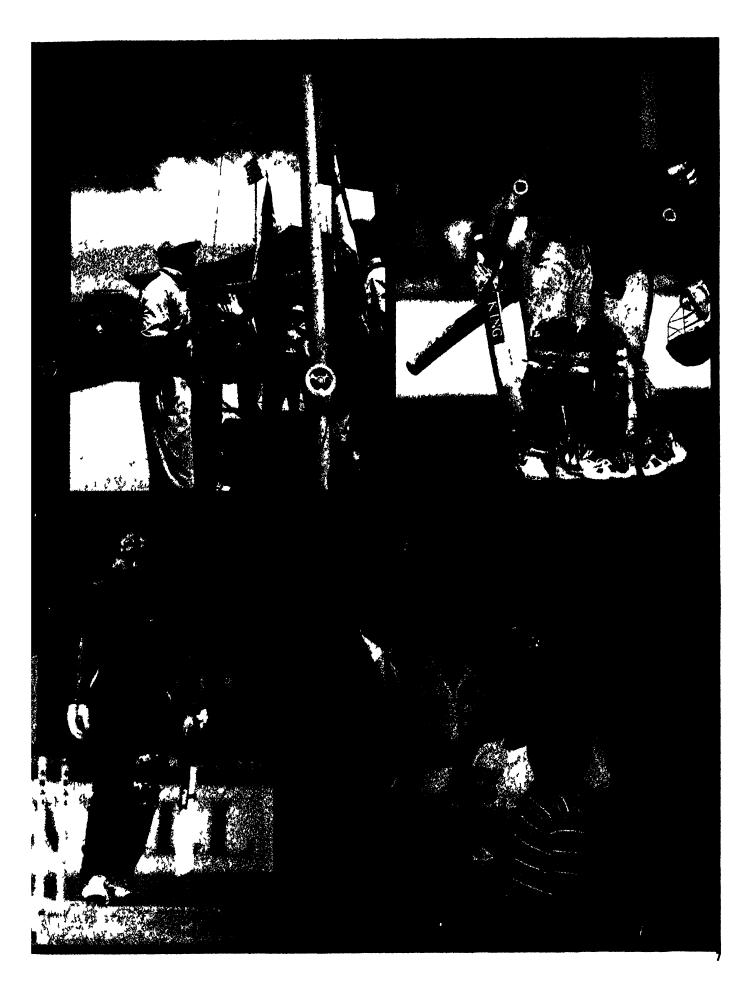
(Top)The winning run continues...The Indian cricket team thanks to the valiant efforts of Sachin Tendulkar, won the Singer Akai Nidahas trophy after defeating hosts Sri Lanka in the final

(Left)Why the cricket boards of the sub-continent organise-tournaments during the monsoon months defies imagination...the result is pressure on the players, disillusioned spectators, and of course rain drenched empty stadiums

(Right)The way the cookie crumbled. The final was a tense affair and could have gone either way, but the Sri Lanka tail just did not wag. Here Banderatilleke departs for nought, run out







STORY

△ An hour by hour account of what caused
 △ RONALDO to have a breakdown on the day of the World Cup Final.
 △ This mystery has been the story of the World

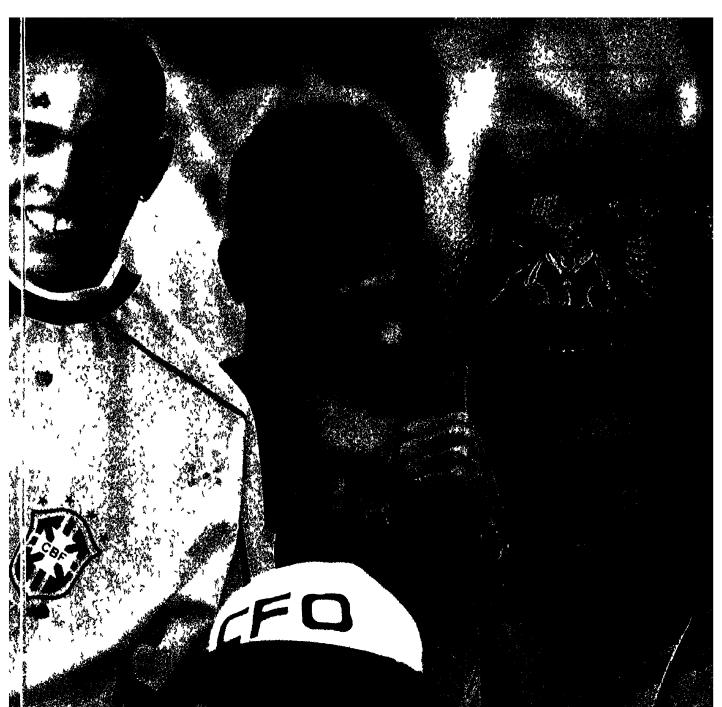
FROM NOVY KAPADIA, PARIS

T started as a tale of two team-sheets. On the day of the World Cup Final, the first team-sheet was released at 7.48 p.m., a little over an hour before the kick-off. Suddenly, there was a buzz at the press tribune at the majestic Stade

de France, as the teamsheet revealed that Edmundo was in and Ronaldo was out of Brazil's starting eleven for

the Final.





PHOTOGRAPHS COLORSPORT

THAT FALED

STORY

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This confirmed the rumour or talk amongst the Brazilian media that Ronaldo may miss the Final. There was a flurry of activity to find out the cause of this sensational omission. As the media personnel scattered helter skelter to check the facts, the team-sheet was withdrawn, with the excuse that there was a printing error.

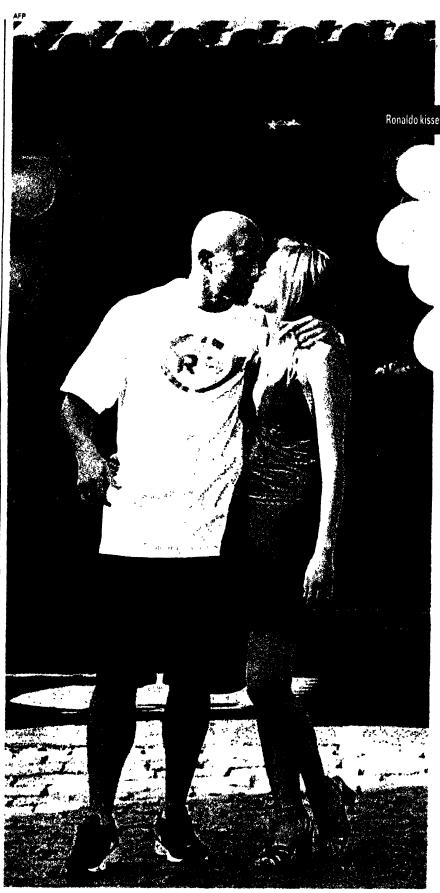
Then at 8.18 p.m., a new list was handed out. Ronaldo was re-instated. Officially, it was later stated that Ronaldo had been cleared to play by the Brazilian medical staff 45 minutes before the kick-off. What happened in the period of time between the release of the two team-sheets and what really went wrong with the world's best player on the day of the Final still remains an enigma.

Theories ranging from a secret love agony, an epileptic fit, stomach pains, pain-killing drugs for a troublesome knee injury or an ankle injury which made him groggy, stress-related panic, heart tests and brain scan have flooded the media in both Italy (Ronaldo plays for Inter Milan) and Brazil. The Ronaldo mystery remains the story of the World Cup.

Here is an hour by hour or blow by blow account of what really happened on that fateful Sunday (July 12) in Paris: A little after noon, at 12.10 p.m. to be exact, Ronaldo, again struggling with knee problems, returned to room 209 of the Chateau de Grande Romaine hotel after a lengthy treatment with teammate Roberto Carlos for a siesta. This was scheduled to last until 4 p.m.

However, the siesta period, necessary to calm nerves was disturbed at 2 p.m. At that fateful hour, Ronaldo collapsed. Roommate Roberto Carlos witnessed Ronaldo having convulsions and made an emergency call to summon the Brazilian team doctors. Soon, panic gripped the entire Brazilian squad. Hotel director Paul Chevalier claimed he heard numerous shouts of "He's Dead!"

In a minute or so, Dr. Joaquim Matta rushed to Ronaldo's room and, along with teammate Cesar Sampaio, freed Ronaldo's tongue. Ronaldo was



having convulsions and the doctor cleaned saliva from his mouth. The star striker started to breathe at 2.15. There was a brief calm as Ronaldo told the anxious onlookers that he was

However, Zagallo suddenly received a phone call from the president of the Brazilian Football Federation (CBF), Mr Ricardo Teixeira, stating that Ronaldo was on

ana at his mother's house in Rio De Janeiro during a party to celebrate her 21st birthday.

feeling better. There was a brief lull before the storm. Ronaldo tried to go back to sleep, with the team doctors staying in the room, but the nap lasted just 15 minutes.

The multi-million pound goal-scorer was examined once again by the medicos at 2.30 p.m. and allowed to rest. However, he was restless and woke up again at 2.45 p.m. He took a bath and spoke to Dr Matta and Roberto Carlos.

Confused at what took place, Dr Matta phoned the Clinique de Lilas in Paris at 5.10 p.m., to report what happened to a panel of French doctors. As Ronaldo was still feeling groggy, it was decided to carry out a series of neurological examinations on the player.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Brazilian squad left for the Stade de France, venue of the biggest sporting event on the planet, the World Cup Final. At 5.50 p.m. with a special police escort, Ronaldo was rushed to the hospital to undergo tests, accompanied by Dr Matta and two security guards. The congested Paris streets delayed the journey.

At 6.20 p.m. Ronaldo reached the hospital and was examined by three top French specialists. He signed autographs for the hospital staff, then underwent a series of tests, including a heart probe and a brain scan. In a little over an hour, the tests were completed. At 7.40 p.m. Ronaldo and his entourage left the clinic for the stadium. The journey took 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, there was feverish activity in the Brazilian dressing room. Mario Zagallo told the rest of the squad that, in 1962, Brazil won the World Cup without Pele and now they could do it without Ronaldo. Zagallo removed Ronaldo's name from the team-sheet and replaced him with frontman Edmundo.

his way back to the stadium and must play.

A harassed and over-wrought Zagallo was now perplexed. Ronaldo, meanwhile, arrived at the stadium, met the Brazilian medical commission and said he was ready to play. Accompanied by Dr Toledo and Dr Matta, he started to warm-up in the dressing room.

Suddenly, the dilemma on whether to include Ronaldo in Brazil's starting line-up provoked arguments among the players in the dressing room. It was bedlam. Everybody had an opinion. The Brazilian squad just lost their concentration, in this brief period and were just not mentally focussed for the biggest game of their lives.

No wonder they were lacklustre in the opening half, in which France scored twice. Edmundo admitted that, "As a result of this crisis, our psychological preparation was affected." The medical staff attached to the Brazilian squad insisted that Ronaldo should be left out or maybe brought on in the second half, as he had suffered a convulsion hours before the match.

Theories ranging from a secret love agony, an epileptic fit, stomach pains, pain-killing drugs for a troublesome knee injury or an ankle injury which made him groggy, stress-related panic, heart tests and brain scan have flooded the media in both Italy and Brazil

Skipper Dunga later said, "Initially, I was against his inclusion." Edmundo who had to mentally prepare himself to play was also raging mad that now he was again going to be dropped. A group of players led by Leonardo felt he should play. Dunga admitted that "there are differences of opinion even in a family of four, so it's normal this should be the case in a group of 60 people."

Then came the ultimatum. A delegation acting on behalf of, some say, the Brazilian football overlord, Joao Havelange, the outgoing FIFA president, or his son-in-law, Ricardo Teixeira or the team sponsors Nike (this accusation has since been denied by the sportswear company) insisted that Ronaldo should play.

Many Brazilian journalists felt that Nike had pressurised Zagallo through Teixeira. Later Dunga added fuel to fire by criticising team officials for overruling the doctors opposed to the striker's selection for the Final. Ronaldo announced he was fine and was given the green signal to play. Zagallo now appeased the infuriated Edmundo.

Finally, Brazil walked on to the pitch but Ronaldo failed to squat down for the team picture, fearing he could aggravate an old knee injury. This instinctive action showed that Ronaldo had a physical ailment besides, of course, the emotional trauma. Ultimately, who was to blame for allowing Ronaldo to play? Was it Teixeira's fault or Havelange's or Zagallo's or were they all puppets of the paymaster? As the words of the song go, the answer my friend is blowing in the wind.

In the Final itself, viewed by a live television audience of 1.7 billion people, it was obvious to all that Ronaldo was a shadow of his former self. He was easily hustled off the ball and he neither came to meet the ball nor darted into gaps behind the defence.

In close-ups, he looked impassive, pale and flat. After watching an ineffectual Ronaldo in action, many experts from Dutch legend Ruud Gullit to Mike Brearley, former

STORY

Ш

England cricket captain and currently member of the British

Psycho-Analytical Society wrote that the ace Brazilian striker was in no fit state to take the field.

Mike Brearley, in his thought-provoking article in *The Observer*, 19 July felt that Ronaldo psycho-analysts, it seemed that Ronaldo succumbed to the pressure of great expectations of his teammates, in his own country and the whole world. He was terrified beyond his mental capacities and the fit, according to Brearley, "was an unconscious attempt to remove

Ronaldo takes a shot at goal against Scotland. (Right): Girlfriend Susana Werner cheering in the stands

and Brazil were unhinged by a loss of collective nerve. Brearley also warned that Ronaldo was half-dead and could actually have died on the field of play. Many others have also stated that Ronaldo's sacrifice could have been fatal.

Maybe, FIFA should hold an inquiry into the Ronaldo fiasco. If, as reported, he did have a big fit and it is not either the pangs of love or just pre-match nerves, then permitting him to play was very dangerous. It was like allowing a boxer into the ring who has just had a blackout in the dressing room. The FIFA inquiry could also ascertain if there were other forces at work which got Ronaldo to play against medical advice.

The scholarly Brearley felt that Ronaldo's fit was "a symptom of a panic attack, a mini-breakdown of the body co-ordination that represented his mental break." According to himself from the battle." Brearley also felt that the other players lost their nerve when they realised their star was in a state of trauma. It was like a collective delusion that, without Ronaldo, they were nothing.

In such an emotional crisis, many have blamed Zagallo for not being more firm and protecting his team from immaturity and vulnerability. It was felt that Zagallo should have been more protective and said firmly, "Ronaldo cannot play for us; let us play for Ronaldo." Instead Zagallo was immersed in the collective delusion that, without Ronaldo, Brazil were no good. It is surprising that a manager of his experience did not replace him when he saw how ineffective Ronaldo was.

There is a also a medical theory being circulated about why Ronaldo had the mysterious coma and looked so dopey in the Final. It is reported that the pain-killing drugs given to the



superstar could have caused the sickening convulsive fit. Ronaldo has admitted that he took the anti-inflammatory drug Voltaren for a troublesome knee injury during the tournament.

Medical experts now feel that the convulsions are a possible Voltaren side effect. There is also a theory that he was taking medicines for stomach pains. The reason he appeared so lethargic in the Final was that he had been given sedatives after his fit. Considering the strain on his body, it was unfair to ask Ronaldo to play in the Final.

Thus, sedatives and pain-killers combined with mental pressure could have been the cause of Ronaldo's breakdown. For allowing Ronaldo to







play, when he was obviously unwell, Dr Lidio Toledo faced a Rio-de-Janeiro State Regional Medical Council inquiry.

The Inter Milan team doctor Pierro Valpi was also furious that the Brazilian medical staff was refusing to explain exactly what happened to Ronaldo and what tests he was given.

Yet another view that was circulated about why Ronaldo flopped was that the young man suffered the agony of betrayal by the girl he had been courting for some years.

Overburdened by great expectations as a player, Ronaldo could not cope with the agonies of love.

He suffered mental depression as a jilted lover and had a seizure. His friends claim that "Ronaldo had a

furious phone row with his girlfriend, the night before the Final." They felt his fit was triggered by the row that he had with Susana which left his emotions in a mess.

Ronaldo was upset that his long-time girlfriend had suddenly

Ronaldo was upset that his long-time girlfriend had suddenly developed a crush on sports reporter Pedro Bial, a pin-up boy of the Rio-based Globo TV developed a crush on sports reporter Pedro Bial, a pin-up boy of the Rio-based Globo TV. Susana was in France during the World Cup. But Ronaldo, entirely focused on helping Brazil succeed in each round, could spend little time with her during such an important tournament.

The beautiful blonde, of German ancestry, felt neglected and gradually drifted to the arms of Pedro Bial. It was reported in several tabloids that Susana would sit with Pedro in the stands and even hug him passionately when a goal was scored. Susana had met Pedro at a TV party in Rio, a couple of months ago. But their relationship really blossomed at Paris.

It is learnt that some of Ronaldo's friends told him that Susana and Bial



had got very intimate. Ronaldo, already under so much football-related stress, just snapped. He was an emotional wreck and his body could not cope with any more stress. He had that tearful row with Susana on the night before the Final and was feeling very low.

Some of Ronaldo's teammates and journalist friends feel that Ronaldo's fit was triggered by the row with his girlfriend. Cesar Sampaio and Cafu recalled that Ronaldo was always very depressed when he had a row with Susana. Tabloid stories revealed that Ronaldo and Susana have quarrelled several times in the past on their lifestyles.

Susana is a talented TV star, a player herself and a model who wants to develop her own career. Ronaldo, who earns enough, had often tried to persuade her to avoid the media world as he felt they would use her to intrude on him. He wanted to relax with her after the pressures of football.

However, the strong-willed Susana

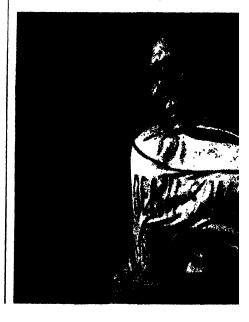
wanted to develop a career of her own. Thus the pressures grew which finally snapped on the night before the Final. So maybe Ronaldo was a victim of a love affair that went awry.

In Brazil, the buck-toothed Ronaldo is now the God that failed. There have been an avalanche of recriminations which could have major repercussions on his career. The team doctor, Lidio Toledo hinted on Globo television that Ronaldo was epileptic. He said that, "whenever a person suffers from stress and is epileptic, it could cause a crisis."

Such a statement could have a dangerous impact on his career. His 18 million pound career with Inter Milan is in jeopardy as the Italian club may not like to continue with a player who has health hazards. Already, Inter Milan have considered suing FIFA or the Brazilian Football Federation, for allowing their prized player to risk his health.

With no evidence yet as to why Ronaldo fell into a mysterious coma,

rumours, accusations and counter-accusations are in abundance. Hounded by journalists, Ronaldo has now said that he is not epileptic. He shouted to journalists, "I don't have anything. It's nothing like that...The tests were already done in





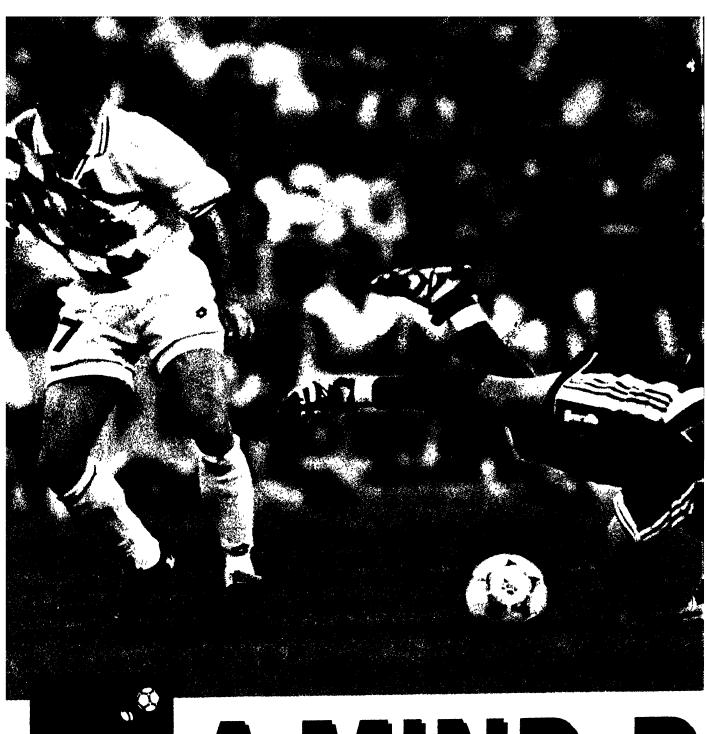


(Left): A Mexican fan showing her necklace during the third round match between Mexico and The Netherlands. (Top): Argentine fans cheer their team onward. (Right): A Tunisian supporter at a first round match between Tunisia and Romania. The inscription on the teddy bear means 'Tunis'.

(Below left): A South African supporter chants slogans in the match against Saudi Arabia. (Below right): Jamaican fans going berserk in their country's match against Japan







A MIND-B

CROATIA, a debutant in this World Cup,
stunned everyone when they reached
the last four of the world's premier tournament

PER



PHOTOGRAPHS AFP

HE World Cup's Balkan war babies Croatia, smaller than Scotland with a population of 4.8 million, finishing third was a sporting phenomenon. Their canny coach, the 63-year-old Miroslav Blazevic said, "It is an achievement impossible to measure. No other event could be greater for our nation."

Considering that it was Croatia's first ever World Cup, the performance is mind-boggling. Only once in the past has a World Cup debutant reached the last four stage and that was Portugal, with the great Eusebio in their ranks, way back in 1966.

Also, Croatia has only 200 professional footballers. Thrice champions Germany whom they crushed 3-0 in the quarter finals have reportedly over six million (60 lakhs) registered players (of all age groups). This is more than Croatia's entire population. Most of Croatia's professional footballers, except those playing abroad, earn in a year what Klinsmann, Beckham, Zidane and Shearer harvest in a week.

So Croatia's success in France '98 can be seen as a triumph for the common man and the developing nations in football. A nation with limited infrastructure and few professional players, but with some motivational coaching managed to cock a snook at the established football powers enriched by money from sponsors and satellite television—a lesson for India perhaps.

However, Croatia's success is not entirely a romantic fairy tale. In the

post-war era (the split up of Yugoslavia in 1991 led to fierce ethnic conflicts between the Serbs and the Croats), there was a paucity of funds for football. Hence over a hundred promising, young players are annually tempted abroad by scouts from Italy, Germany, Spain, Austria, Turkey and England.

This trend may be damaging for the development of the domestic game, but in the short term it is advantageous for the national side. Their best young players gained valuable experience in the major European leagues. So the Premier League, Serie A and La Liga became finishing schools for Croatia. Slaven Bilic, the only university graduate in the squad said, "Our success has not surprised me. A large number of players are with the big European clubs." Only two of their playing eleven were home-based players, Drazen Ladic in goal and central defender Dario Simic, one of the success stories of France 98 who marked Klinsmann out of the game in Croatia's quarter final triumph.

Both Ladic and Simic are from
Croatia Zagreb (formerly Dynamo
Zagreb in the communist era and now
famous as the club which thrice
Wimbledon runner - up Goran
Ivanisevic supports). However the
22-year-old Simic is now on his way
to Italy and may join either A.C. Milan
or city rivals Inter Milan. The talent
and potential of some of these
Croatian players is amazing. Another
talented defender, the 20-year-old
Igor Tudor who plays for Hadjuk Split

OGGLING TO THE STATE OF THE STA

AVOR SUKFR, the 30-year-old crafty Croatian, the top-scorer in France 98 with six goals is a man for all seasons. He is a gregatious extrovert who can communicate in several European languages, Spanish, French, German and English. A trendy dresser, Versace is his favourite designer. He is the George Best of the Ninetics as the high life has always fascinated him.

In the 1997-98 season, Suker's form slumped for his club Real Madrid. He became the playboy Suker, due to a much publicised romance with an attractive Spanish TV presenter. When Croatia lost 1-2 to Germany in a memorable Euro 96 quarter-final, Suker did not just drown his sorrows with drink or brood in his hotel. Instead he and teammate midfielder Zvonimir Boban danced away their blues at a popular nightclub in Manchester

Yet despite such off field frolics, football is a passion for Suker nicknamed "Sukerman" by his adoring fans. He has an entire room at home devoted to tapes and books about football. The Croatian striker also has his own Internet page, full of tributes to his sublime playing skills. He is also very superstitious. He still has a bottle of red wine given to his family on the day he was born in 1968.

He is a bundle of contradictions, whimsical, egocentric but is a committed teamman and a brilliant forward renowned for his poaching skills, deft dribbles and superb positional play. As he showed in France 98, he is a clinical finisher, scoring a goal in six of the seven matches his country played in. He only missed out in the 0-1 loss to Argentina in their final Group H league match.

Throughout the tournament he has remained calm and almost serene. This was best exemplified in the chaos of a twice-taken,

'SUKERMAN'

After winning the Golden Boot at France '98, DAVOR SUKER dedicated this award to the people of Croatia



match winning penalty against Romania in the second round. Suker converted the first kick but the referee ordered that the kick be re-taken as Boban had run into the penalty box before the whistle was blown. Such folly would have upset most players. But Suker is made of different stuff. He calmly put his right hand to his chin in a philosopher's pose. Later he quipped, "just checking my pulse rate. When it was 120, I knew I could control my nerves." He scored the second penalty kick with a slight variation to enable Croatia enter the quarter-final.

Suker was born a New Year's baby on the first of January 1968. He was brought up in Osijek, a town 150 nules east of Zagreb, in a sports crazy family. His father, Tomislav Suker was an Olympic shot-putter, for erstwhile Yugoslavia. From childhood, however, young Davor Suker had a fascination for football. His career started with Osijek F.C. Next he moved to Dynamo Zagreb, now Croatia Zagreb. It is in this club that his goal-scoring instincts were finely honed. In five seasons, he scored 167 goals for his club. His goal-scoring feats, led to a lucrative offer from the Spanish club, Sevilla.

He was in Sevilla when the cruel civil war began in July 1991. An ardent nationalist he wanted to return and help his people against the Serbs. However international footballers, were regarded as too important to be sacrificed on the

battlefield. So he stayed on in Sevilla. After his stunning performances in Euro 96, he was transferred to the glamorous Real Madrid, the current UEFA Champions League winners.

His first season at Real Madrid was a personal triumph. He was the club's top-scorer with 24 goals and led them to the Spanish league title. In the second season, he seemed distracted after his much publicised romance with a Spanish TV presenter. He got relegated to the substitutes bench. The Yugoslav, Predrag Mijatovic became Real Madrid's first choice striker. Galled at being left out of so many matches, Suker has sought a transfer from Real Madrid.

His international goal-scoring record is quite phenomenal. He has scored 36 goals in 42 matches for a success rate of 85 per cent.

This compares favourably with" Pele's international record of 97 goals in 110 internationals for Brazil and Ronaldo's 29 goals in 41 matches. His awareness of space, ability to drift away from markers and get into goal-scoring positions and deft touch is quite amazing. In France 98, he scored some incredible goals. For the match-winner against Holland, in the third place play off, Suker was lurking on the left side of the Dutch penalty area and swept the ball first time through the burly defender Jaap Stam's legs and into the far corner. Against France, in the semi-finals, he capitalised on a defensive mix-up and in a flash latched onto a through pass and placed into the net. Suker can appear languid but his quickness of thought enables him to glide into scoring positions. Near the goal he is a clinical finisher as well as an effective poacher.

Some of his skills on the ball are breathtaking. Midway through the second half, of the 3-0 victory over Germany Suker received the

ball with his back to goal close to the touchline. Behind him was the German defender Michael Tarnat. Suker evaded Tarnat with some magical skills. With a sudden turn and roll of his right foot across the ball and skip to the right he drew the German wing back into a challenge. As Tarnat lunged forward he threaded the ball through a gap of perhaps a foot between the German studs and white touchline and sped away from his marker to the byline.

Winning the Golden Boot, at France 98 gave him great satisfaction. An ardent nationalist he dedicated this personal triumph to the people of his newly recognised nation. Suker becomes the second East European in successive World Cups to win this coveted award. In USA 1994, Hristo Stoitchkov of Bulgaria and Oleg Salenko of Russia were joint top-scorers with six goals each. However even Suker could not break the jinx of the top-scorer in the World Cup finishing with six goals. Since the 1978 World Cup this has been the trend. Kempes in 1978, Paolo Rossi in 1982, Gary Lineker in 1986, Toto Schillaci in 1990, Stoitchkov and Salenko in 1994 and now Suker, all finished with six goals each. It does seem that the Frenchman, Juste Fontaine's record of 13 goals in a single World Cup at Sweden in 1958 will remain forever.

The glamorous Suker lives life to the full but is still a perfect team-man. He is a leading influence within the national squad, negotiating with his national federation and potential sponsors on all matters related to pay and commercial rights. He was a member of the Yugoslav team which won the Junior World Cup in 1987 and also a member of the Yugoslav squad which participated in the 1990 World Cup at Italy.

Novy Kapadia, Paris

and was used as a substitute is set to sign up for Juventus of Italy.

The spine of Croatia's team have honed their skills in the major clubs in Europe. Defenders Slaven Bilic and Igor Simac play in the Premier League for Everton and Derby County respectively. Robert Jarni, a brilliant overlapping wing back turns out for Real Betis of Spain.

In midfield, the skilful Aljosa
Asanovic is from Napoli of Italy and
skipper Zvonimir Boban has excelled
for A.C.Milan for many years.
Upfront, they missed brilliant striker
Alen Boksic of Lazio (Italy) due to
injury. However roving forward
Goran Vlaovic plays in Spain for
Valencia and the mercurial Davor
Suker has played for Spanish clubs,
Seville and now Real Madrid.

The Croatians always played with a lot of national intensity but in the past (such as Euro '96), often suffered because of a lack of emotional control. At France '98, they revealed that they had mastered this art and instead became both cagey and canny. They defended in depth, teased and tormented the Germans into errors in the memorable World Cup quarter final win at Lyons.

Their solid defence and counter-attacking tactics nearly worked against France in the semifinals also but lapses of concentration led to their 1-2 defeat. Teams from Eastern Europe were often accused of having a "mentality problem", a weakness and inability to be consistent and had a tendency to fade away in crucial matches. This Croatian team shattered that myth. Also, as most of the Croatians have lucrative contracts with established clubs, they did not use the World Cup as a trade fair to just display their skills and seek rich employers.

Prior to the World Cup, Croatia's coach Miroslav Blazevic had said, "Our players are the best in the world. We'll be the dark horses in the World Cup and will play in the Final against France."

It was dismissed as an outrageous saying, a footballing answer to Muhammad Ali, just an olf the cuff reply. However Blazevic proved quite

prophetic They played France in the semi final instead of the Final A great motivator Blazevic who has coached club sides in Switzerland France and Greece, knew that his team had the talent and the spirit to achieve success

Blazevic understood the psychology of his countrymen and their passion for football. It is not just football but sport that provides a chance for Croatia and its people to achieve global recognition. This has led to the immense popularity of successful sportspersons, such as Goran Ivanisevic and Iva Majoli (tennis), Dino Rada and Toni Kukoc (basketball) and footballers Davor Suker Zvonimir Boban and Robert Prosinecki in this impoverished Adriatic republic So Blazevic a keen follower of astrology was certain his team many of whose talents and tactical nuances had been developed in top European clubs would be inspired in the World Cup

Boban the captain of Croatia aptly summarised this feeling when he said, 'When we come together the motivation is tremendous. Everyone is so positive. The coach and the captain were dead right. Playing in the World Cup. the Croatian players were ablaze with a patriotic zeal, they played with massive national intensity.

Their top-scorer Davor Suker was also quite philosophical about the achievements of the team. He said,

After all that we have endured on our streets and the countryside then what do we have to fear on a sporting field of green "

Suker was referring to the many horrifying crimes inflicted on the Croats during their war of independence, such as devastating damage to the cities of Dubrovnik and Vukovar

The question that next arises is that how does such a small nation continuously generate so many new players?

The major factor is the passion for football Many of the fans are as passionate as coach Blazevic and the players When the international



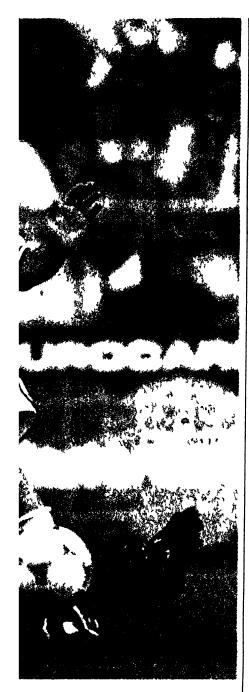
French midfielder Youri Djorkaeff (left) looks on as Croatian defender Dario Simic runs with the ball after a duel France defeated Croatia in the semi final

community threatened to impose sanctions on Croatia because of the political situation the people were more concerned about the possibility of missing the World Cup than the economic consequences. Such is the passion for football in this small country that the current national president. Franjo Tudjman decreed that the name of Dynamo Zagreb be

changed to Croatia

The Croatian fans affectionately refer to their national team as the "fiery XI" They attended the matches in France in large, numbers wearing replica chessboard red and white shirts Overall, the fans were well behaved but sang joyously during the matches

Croatian fans revelled in the



attention their country received after reaching the World Cup semi finals. They welcomed the coverage and media attention as it raised the national profile abroad and convinced the world that Croatia was separate from Yugoslavia.

The 3-0 quarter final win over Germany (a country which has given massive economic aid to the Croatians) was seen "as the ultimate confirmation of nationhood." Croatian fans said that, "There were more bigger crowds in Zagreb (capital) than on the day of independence " (from Yugoslavia)

Success in football relegated political enemity and jingoism to the background. It was reported that even their bitter rivals, the Serbs in Belgrade, celebrated the Croatian success. Many national papers of Croatia covered the World Cup matches on their front pages. Media coverage of football in Croatia is as intense as in Italy. England or Spain

Due to limited resources the generating of football talent in Croatia does not occur because of superb infrastructure but is a natural process. There is no national director of coaching, no money for schools of excellence or football academies like the Tata Football Academy

Twice a year the Croatian Football Federation conducts camps for promising footballers. The country has about 5 000 coaches but only about 200 are professional. Most of the coaches work part time or are employed in schools and colleges. Even the professional coaches earn only about 400 pounds (or about Rs 28,000) per annum which is a pittance even in India. Only first division clubs can afford individual coaches for age-group teams.

Yet Croatia produces so many talented players that, along with Brazil, they are the only other country to have reached the quarter finals of the current Sub-Junior (under 16 years), Junior (under 18 years) and senior World Cup

Thus, the production of players in Croatia has been spontaneous over many decades. In the post World War II era, the talents of many of these talented Croats was developed by Hadjuk Split. Dynamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade, with money poured in by the Yugoslav federal socialist government of President Tito.

Prosinecki even played for Red Star when they won the prestigious European Champions Cup in 1991, beating Marseilles of France on penalties Way back in 1953, four Yugoslavs (all Croats) played for a Rest of the World XI against England at Wembley to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Football Association of England

They were Vladimir Beara as goalkeeper, Zlatco Cajkovski, Bernard Vukas and Branko Zebec When Yugoslavia reached the 1962 World Cup semi finals, their key striker was a Croat Jerkovic Again, the Yugoslav side which made it to the semi finals of the 1976 European championships had three Croats in their playing eleven Buljan Surjak and Katalinski

Wing back Robert Jarni midfielders Prosinecki and Boban and forward Suker were in the last amalgamated Yugoslavian team at Italia 90 Half of the last all Yugoslav team against Faroes Islands in the 1992 European qualifying championship were Croatians Suker Boban and Prosinecki were members of the Yugoslav team which won the World Youth Cup in 1987 beating West Germany in the Final Prosinecki was chosen as the player of the tournament

In France 98 Croatia were the surprise packet. They had a dream run to the semi final and in the process of finishing third humbled established powers like Germany and Holland At present it is boom time for Croatian football However it is to be seen if they can maintain this momentum The important question is that without adequate financial support, sponsorship and infrastrure, for how long can Croatia produce a flow of talented players Money and professionalism is needed for domestic football in Croatia to flourish Otherwise like Bulgaria another small nation who were 1994 World Cup semi finalists Croatia could also fall by the wayside Many of their stars are in the twilight of their careers Stimac is 30 Asanovic 32. Boban and Prosinecki are both 29 vears old and Suker 30

Four years later, in the 2002 World Cup these stalwarts may be fading. It is to be seen if Croatia then has adequate replacements. If not, then Croatia, like Bulgaria and Germany may realise that those who do not learn the lessons of history are apt to be punished.

THE KING OF FRANCE

After his superb performance in the Final of the World Cup, ZINEDINE ZIDANE is now regarded as one of the best players in the world

IDANF, whose first name Zinedine means "beauty of the faith" in Arabic is the son of Algerian immigrants. Born in Marseille, he is from the Kabyle minority in Algeria. He is one of the few "Beurs" or French-born North Africans to succeed in French football.

Now he has become an icon for a whole generation of "Beurs" who feel more discriminated against than any other group in French society. In the troubled northern suburb of Marseille, where Zidane was born, is now a place of pilgrimage.

The two headed first-half goals scored by this tall, dark, brooding French-Algerian made him a new national hero in both France and Algeria. The prestigious French daily '1' Equipe' paid him the ultimate tribute: "Zidane: master of the world."

Similarly, in the Algerian daily, 'Dentain L' Algerie,' Zidane was given sole credit for the French victory. The headline was 'Zidane 3 Brazil 0'. Another Algerian newspaper 'Authentique,' had a front page picture of the French playmaker, with a bold caption, "Zidane floored Brazil."

By his sublime dribbling and passing skills, Zidane, the player of the 1998 World Cup had a massive impact on the French psyche. His and the French team's success at football seems to have sparked off a minor

revolution in French political life. Football due to the efforts of Zidane, Desailly (of Ghanian descent) and Lilian Thuram (born in the Caribbean Island, Guadeloupe) has become the symbol of popular culture.

Andy Martin of the French
Department of Cambridge University,
England wrote in 'The Independent'
that success in the World Cup and
identity with players like Zidane,
Thuram, Henry, Diomede, Vieira
(born in Senegal) and Karembeu
(born in New Caledonia in the
Australasia region) has enabled
Frence to embrace its racial diversity
and has given young blacks and Arabs
a sense of identity for the first time.

He wrote, "France was re-inventing itself in front of my eyes and had become something more along the lines of Brazil, not just in terms of football, but confidently multi-racial and hedonistic to boot."

A young black Frenchman who was amongst the millions at the victory celebrations at Champs Elysees said, "This is our liberation. This is the day on which we are all re-bron. Football is the sport of the future. Thanks to Zidane."

Michele Tribalat, a demographer and writer on immigration believes that France '98 could have have a significant spiritual and political impact. Thanks to the efforts of Zidane, Thuram, Henry and Desailly no longer would France be an overtly racist nation. Instead, the World Cup victory, the skills of Zidane and his wonderful demeanour would restore French faith in the principle of 'one nation, many races.'

Zidane, Thuram and others have changed the way of life in France forever. Earlier, France was not a football crazy nation like Italy, England, Spain or Germany. A new French identity has taken place. Prior to the World Cup, football in France was passionately followed only in the port town of Marseille and St. Etienne. It was not part of the daily life of the effete intellectuals fixated with their own language, literature and history or the smart citizens of Paris.

Now it has all changed.

In the cafes, in the Universities and on the Metros in Paris, the talk was only about football. Considering the way the French people have adopted Zidane as their new national hero, France is now having to re-think itself as a serious football-playing nation.

In the past, the philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau, the Surrealists and



Jacques Derrida all attempted deconstructing French culture but failed However, what the great writers were unable to achieve, Zidane and the multi-ethnic football team of France have succeeded by their glorious World Cup triumph

Just 26 years old, Zidane remains quiet, unassuming and shy. In France he is now affectionately called

Zizou or the little God But Zidane is just glad that he has helped his team win and also gained a major personal triumph. Prior to the World Cup there were many sceptics who doubted Zidane's temperament for the big occasion. Many French journalists were concerned that he went limp on the big occasion. They cited the three Furopean Cup finals in which he appeared two for Juventus (1997 and 1998 Champions Cup) and one for his former French club. Bordeaux (1995 UFFA Cup)

His team lost on each occasion partly because of unimpressive performances by Zidane He was seen

The picture of Zinedine Zidane on the back of a house in Marseille

as a man of fragile moods. The critics again had a field day when he was sent off against Saudi Arabia midway through the second half for petulantly standing on a fallen opponent. They felt that Zidane was struggling to cope with the pressure.

However when Zidanc icturned to the team for the quarter final against Italy he gave yet another vintage performance. His Juventus team mate Gianluca Pessotto was given the task of man marking him However Zidane led Pessotto in a merry dance.

The triumph of character the ability to overcome the burden of great expectations on him was ultimately Zidane's greatest success. His friend and former Boideaux team-mate the French left back. Bixente Lizarazu said — Zizou is a character 1 know him well. I ve talked to him and it's very hard for him to live through this time. He has a terrible weight on his shoulders. Everyone is expecting the most from him. It's not easy."

Yes, it was not easy but Zidane

discovered the strength of character to deliver when it mattered the most. The new hero of French football who scored two goals on his France debut against the Czech Republic in 1994 scored twice against Brazil in the Final Also, throughout the World Cup, he was the player to watch, capable of a deft turn or a brilliant pass which no one else attempted.

Prior to the start of the World Cup Michel Platini wrote—If France win the Cup, it will be with a great Zinedine Zidane—We cannot win with a little Zidane—Platini proved to be quite clairvoyant at the end but when he made this statement, it was yet another case of added pressure on Zidane—However, by his displays in the World Cup, he emerged as "the great Zidane—and silenced his detractors forever

His finest matches in France '98 were the Final against Brazil, the semi final vs Croatia and the group C league tie vs Saudi Arabia. In these matches he controlled the tempo of the entire game, with invigorating, sinuous runs and delectable, angled passes.

Zidane along with Ronaldo Cafu, Ariel Ortega, Denis Bergkamp Davor Suker and Michael Owen provided moments of sublime brilliance in this World Cup However, Zidane was the most consistent of all these superstars His passing was always imaginative and penetrative

Prior to the Final he had not scored a goal But he silenced his critics on that score also drifting into space at the near post and scoring with perfectly timed headers. Overall his goal scoring record is not great, having scored just 10 goals in 33 matches before the World Cup began. Now he has 12 goals in 38 matches.

Zidane started his career with Cannes in May 1989 Then he moved to Bordeaux in 1992 He was voted Best Young Player in 1994 He was transferred to Juventus of Italy after Euro 96 and is still with them He is an Italian title winner with Juventus At present he is not only King of France but is rated as one of the best players in the world

Novy Kapadia France





FISTS OF FURY

English football fans behave as if an international match is a call to war

N the preliminary league phase of France '98, it seemed that there were two World Cups taking place simultaneously. The first involved the majority of the 32 teams, where fans swapped shirts, got drunk and had a binge until the wee hours of the morning.

Supporters of Brazil (painted faces yellow and green, swaying to the beating of drums and samba music), Argentina (waving blue and white scarves), Holland (painted up in orange and singing vociferously), Italy (some came dressed up as Roman

senators), Norway (dressed like Vikings) and even the sedate Japanese and Koreans rejoiced in the carnival atmosphere of the World Cup.

The Japanese supporters were the most popular visitors—their impeccable manners endeared them to the locals who are certainly not used to football fans being so polite. They were so keen to be accepted by the rest of the world and so conscious of creating a good image for their own

An English national is restrained as French police move in to break up clashes between local youths and English visitors country that they attempted to pick their own litter after each game.

In most games, it was a multi-national, multi-ethnic cosmopolitan crowd. An international party of football fans, depicted in their traditional dress, music and dance. It was fun to be a football fan.

Defeat led to drowning your sorrows in drink, maybe shouting a few obscenities at the coach, shedding a few tears, but finally putting football in perspective: "After all, it is only a game."

When Scotland lost to Morocco 0-3 in their last Group A league match and failed in their bid to reach the second round for the first time in seven appearances, the fans were sad but did not brood on their misery.

The Moroccan fans were also dejected as Norway's upset 2-1 win over Brazil at Marseille on the same night—enabled the latter to sneak into the second round as the second team of the group. This was an ideal scenario for letting off steam.

Instead, after the Scotland vs
Morocco game at the Place Jean
Juares at St. Etienne, both sets of
supporters danced to the tunes of
bagpipes and Moroccan drums.
Bordeaux's Chamber of Commerce
was delighted at the behaviour of
Scottish and Norwegian fans visiting
their city. It took out advertisements
in newspapers to pay tribute to them:
"Thanks and see you soon. We're
missing you already."

However, there was another World Cup going on which involved some English and German fans, in which the atmosphere was palpably tense and often vicious. Prior to England's opening league match vs Tunisia, their fans swapped punches rather



than shirts with the Tunisian supporters, and hurled stones, tables and chairs at the French police and local Arabs supporting Tunisia.

German fans also rioted prior to their crucial Group F league tie vs Yugoslavia at Lens. There, a French policeman was left in a coma after being hit on the head by German hooligans.

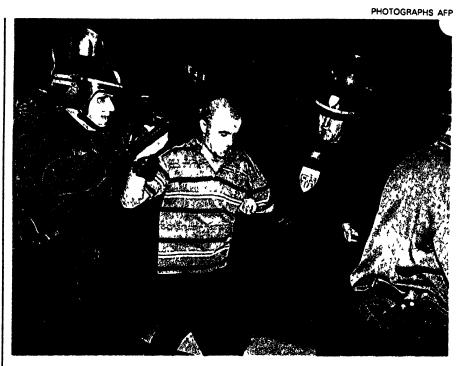
The German media said they were members of a right wing fascist group seeking to stir up trouble and masquerading as football fans. The attitude of these hooligans did arouse a lot of disgust in Germany. A match involving German greats from the past was played to raise money for the officer's family and the German FA even offered to withdraw their side from the tournament.

This was in stark contrast to the English response, which typically involved bland condemnations of the violence, and, a, by now, farcical attempt to explain this was not "football's" problem, but instead, was a symptom of a broader societal malaise.

Violence in Marseille, before and after England's opening league match and the increase in security for their subsequent league matches in Toulouse and Lens led to an increase in the pre-tournament budget of 10 million pounds for security.

The French Interior Minister said that the cost of providing 1,800 policemen in Marseille was 351,000 pounds. A French Government spokesman said that the cost of policing England's huge army of fans was more than 1 million pounds. French cafe owners were threatening to sue the British Government for loss of earnings because their opening hours were restricted to curb English hooligans from running riot.

The question arises as to why English fans behave as if international football is a call to arms. Violence by these fans, or hooligans, at international matches is not a historic fact but a recent phenomenon. On a large scale, it is really a product of the 1980s, though domestic football in the UK was first seriously affected by



This English supporter is arrested for rioting following Argentina's victory over England at Saint-Frience

football violence in the previous decade.

English hooligans indulged in violence and clashed with the police in the European Championships in Germany in 1988 and Sweden in 1992, the 1990 World Cup in Italy and at numerous other international matches. They once forced a friendly tie with the Republic of Ireland to be abandoned after just 25 minutes because of fighting on the terraces.

The match occurred at a sensitive time during negotiations for peace in Northern Ireland, an outcome that the right wing hooligan groups viewed as a sell-out to the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Even Brazil, where football is followed so passionately, reactions are not so extreme. In fact, the 168 million Brazilians showed great maturity and restraint when their team returned home after being trounced 0-3 in the Final against France. There was no witch-hunt against either coach Mario Zagallo or the players but instead introspection at the Ronaldo crisis and an analysis of the causes of the debacle.

What really causes English fans to

become so violent?

There are numerous and varied reactions to this systematic outburst of barbarism, the phenomenon of football vandalism. The progressives feel the reason for this malaise is socio-economic. They view it as a heritage of former Prime Minister Mrs. Margaret Thatcher's economic reforms which have burdened British society with the deepest imbalances and pockets of poverty in Western Europe.

The stereotype of the jobless citizen or 'large lout' thrown into unemployment by inhuman industrial restructuring, scraping a living, does not apply. A person in such a situation cannot muster up the resources to buy plane or train tickets, to travel to foreign countries and pay for the exorbitant stadium tickets.

Evidence of the background of some of these football hooligans proves otherwise. Some of the English hooligans caught red-handed whilst indulging in violence at Marseille were an engineer, an electrician, a railwayman, a fireman, a pilot, students and skilled workers.

James Shaylor seen on TV smashing a Mercedes Benz to pieces is a respectable citizen with a loving wife and daughter. Neighbours of Shaylor

were amazed that he could be so violent. Similarly, at the Liverpool Central Office, most workers were amazed that two of their comtades known to be punctual and diligent, figured among the drunken vandals sentenced in Marseille in a police court to two months of imprisonment.

Examining such evidence, renowned South American novelist Mario Vargas Llosa has presented his own thesis about the irrational brutality of the English hooligans. In an article in The Independent Weekend Review, June 27 he wrote, "it is not the victims, but the beneficiaries of so-called civilisation who make up the bulk of these barbarous hordes who sow violence around the stadiums and burn the stands...the hooligan is no barbarian: he is an exquisite and terrible product of civilisation." His thesis is that privileged citizens of a well-organised society find themselves bored and yearn for what they have lost, like "uncertainty, risk, life lived as instruct and passion."

So he feels that the hooligans are normal cutzens wanting to break the habitual norms of contact and to live by instinct. I losa sees the mass of fans reverting to tribalism and the desire to wreck havoc in "the anonymity offered by dissolution in a collective entity" He feels this problem is more accentuated amongst the English because of their stiff upper lip attitudes and generally reserved nature.

Excessive intake of alcohol is touted by many including Llosa as another cause for football vandalism
Undoubtedly, English fans drink a lot. A barman at the Cafe le Fregate spoke with contempt of the English fans when he said that, "normal people come here in the morning and order coffee and croissants. The English come and what do they want? Beer. At midday, the civilised world sits down to lunch. And what do the English want? Beer." But alcohol induced violence is an easy excuse.

The Scottish fans drink excessively but they sing and celebrate even when their team koses! The Irish fans also

drink excessively. After losing 0-1 to Italy in Rome, the Irish fans danced and drank with the Italians at Piazaa Navona and other squares till late into the night. The Irish fans are remembered for their famous song, "Ole, Ole, ole ole....." which is copied by football fans of many nations.

Sociologists trace the rise of football violence to loss of Empire and loss of identity. The violence on foreign soil, is seen as a contempt for foreigners. Feminist writer Suzanne Moore takes At any international match, whether in England or abroad, the English fans are known for their violent proclivities. France '98 was no exception

violence.

Others feel that England was always a violent society, as is evident in the novels of Charles Dickens and nineteenth century literature. However, this violence got regulated and channelled because of the two World Wars earlier this century. Now in the absence of a common foe, the anger is directed at opposing fans in football.

Novelist and photographer Pepita Seth, the wife of famous actor Roshan Seth, who watched football as a child with her uncle at Stamford Bridge



a hard line on glorification of football fans and their violent acts. She says that a series of recent books like Nick Hornby's "Fever Pitch" (an autobiographical account of the author's passion for Arsenal as he grew up) and other such books and TV programmes has given needless glamour and importance to the football fan. She wants more stringent measures to be taken against those who indulge in violent acts. Jimmy Hill, football pundit with the BBC says that football hooligans should receive long jail sentences, in the hope that this would act as a deterrent to further

(Chelsea) and Craven Cottage (Fulham) says, "the sense of discipline, such as forming queues at bus stops is breaking down in English society. Earlier, such attitudes were conditioned by generations who grew up during the hardships of the two World Wars."

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Many others feel that stopping National Service (compulsory for all young men till the early Sixties) has led to a breakdown of values and discipline. There is also a belief that a change in the nature of class relations has contributed to football violence. Where once the establishment could

expect a deference from the mass of the working class, in 1998 this is no longer the case. Class allegiances seem to be forged more on support for one's local football team than Her Majesty's Government. It seems that in the Politically Correct 90s, patriotism for England comes from war (Gulf War 1990-91) and football. No wonder some of the less intelligent fans (if you can call them that) sometimes get these two mixed up.

Nicholas Gillete, author and peace activist, traces the violence and lack of identity to the breakdown of the educational system and the sense of family. Roger Scruton, who writes for the conservative broadsheet The Times, found a certain sympathy with the football hooligans. He blames the declining school educational system for the football violence: "We ought to sympathise with their predicament, forced as they are to build an identity of our national culture. With no conception of England's past, no knowledge of it's religion and no awareness of the ideals that justified Empire, it is hardly surprising if they enter the fray with the cries and threats of savage tribesmen. How else can they acquire a badge of honour and symbol of their deep-down togetherness."

Many English football fans claimed they are more sinned against than sinning. They say they are provoked by opposing fans and policemen who over-react. Rumours such as South American razor gangs planning to hunt down English hooligans, often spread by desperadoes or fascist groups are a catalyst to violence. Some journalists who were at Marseille do maintain that in some cases, naturalised Arabs attacked the English fans in bylanes and narrow alleys, which triggered off the violence.

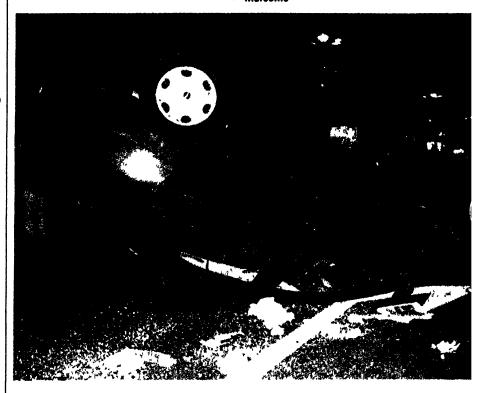
In the three other venues in which England played at Toulose, Lens and St. Etienne, there were stray cases of violence. However, such is the reputation of the English fans that often the entire town closes down business on match day. It must also be said that the British tabloids often inflame passions by their provocative headlines, linking football to war, political rivalry and past battles. The second round England vs Argentina tie at St. Etienne was reverted to as the "Battle of the Falklands - Part 2." In contrast, the reference to Las Malvinas provoked disgust and indifference amongst the Argentinian fans at St. Etienne. They said, "No! No! What war? We are here for the football. This is a football match."

Conservative member of

must be a combination of all these things.

It must also be said that of the estimated 30,000 English fans who travelled to France for the World Cup, only a fringe minority of about 500 committed violent acts and any football violence, home or abroad, is widely condemned in England. Unsurprisingly, and somewhat ironically, with years of practice behind them, the British police have developed excellent surveillance

A car being damaged by English hooligans in Marseille



Parliament, the mayerick Alan Clarke's defence of the behaviour of English fans was quite bizarre and did not have many followers. He stated that "football matches are now a substitute for old medieval tournaments. They are by their nature, aggressive and confrontational, so it is perfectly natural that some of the fans should be obstreperous." Ultimately undecided, with so many opinions being aired, nobody is certain whether it is political, socio-economic or social causes which triggers off the English football hooligans. In fact, it

tactics and organisational skills and have managed to suppress football related violence in the domestic game (evident in Euro 96 held in England) but it is still sadly an inevitable corollary of England's matches abroad. Till this malaise is eradicated, the English fans will never lose the notorious reputation aptly summarised by English FIFA official Keith Cooper: "The English invented it (football) and exported it, and other people picked it up and ran with it. But England intend remaining world champions of hooliganism." Novy Kapadia, France

THE CANNONBALL KID

ROBERTO CARLOS impressed initially with his stunning overlapping runs but somehow, defensive blunders and a free kick that never worked, dented his reputation

HE hyperactive Roberto Carlos with his formidable pace, penchant for the overlap and powerful shots is probably out of place as a left back. He overlapped with zeal but was often caught out defensively.

Many discerning critics feel that maybe Roberto Carlos, the man with the most powerful shot in the world, should play in midfield. This debate has occurred because despite looking glorious when on the overlap, Roberto Carlos made some naive errors in defence.

Against Denmark in the quarter final, he missed an acrobatic bicycle kick clearance when a simple tap away would have sufficed and allowed Brian Laudrup to equalise. In the Final against France, he conceded the corner kick which allowed Zidane to head in the first goal.

It seemed that Roberto Carlos was happier when in attack than in defence. So a move upfield would not be surprising as Roberto Carlos started his career as a forward. His club coach at Palmeiras converted him to a left full back because of his intelligent and speedy anticipations.

Thus, several Brazilian journalists at the World Cup and even former stars like Socrates, Falçao and Jairzinho suggested that maybe Roberto Carlos' best position is in midfield. If this happens, he would only be following a Brazilian tradition.

Way back in the 1982 World Cup, Junior was their cultured left back who frequently overlapped. Four years later at Mexico, Junior played very effectively in Brazil's midfield quartet.

Still despite showing some

defensive frailties, at France '98, Roberto Carlos figured in the "Mastercard All-Star" World Cup



squad chosen by FIFA's technical committee. He was chosen because he has all the qualities of a modern full back, speed on the overlap and ability to defend.

The attacking full-backs Roberto Carlos and Cafu with their frequent runs upfield and crosses provided the necessary width to the Brazilian attack. Their performances at France '98, took the role of the overlapping full back to a new dimension.

The concept of the overlapping wing back was started by Sir Alf Ramsey way back in the 1966 World Cup England, coached by Alf Ramsey, were known as the 'wingless wonders' and relied on wing backs George Cohen on the right and Ray Wilson on the left for overlapping. However they moved into attack only occasionally. The way Roberto Carlos and Cafu surged forward was amazing. They had the speed of a sprinter and the sustained stamina-speed of an 800 metres runner.

Roberto Carlos, in a way, epitomises the modern footballer. He is a perfect athlete who can run the 100 metres in about 11 seconds or under. He can propel a throw-in, over 30 metres, so Brazil frequently used him for long throws into the box. The power in his shots is not only due to his perfect kicking technique and fast run ups but his massive thighs, which are an astonishing 58 cms in diameter.

Though his defensive frailties were highlighted, Roberto Carlos made some good and timely inferceptions. In the semi final against Holland, he used his speed to intercept a perfect left flank cross by young Zenden aimed for Ronald de Boer, surging from the blind side on the right.

In the same match, he also deftly chested another Zenden cross to goalkeeper Taffarel, despite being pressurised by both Patrick Kluivert and Denis Bergkamp. It was sheer class under pressure. He also was very effective in the pre-quarter final tie vs Chile, against the dangerous attacking pair of Ivan Zamarano and Marcello Salas.

As FIFA is now clamping down on

sliding tackles, Roberto Carlos' defensive game is declining. The speed of his recovery and quick sliding tackles were his main defensive abilities.

Another problem which Roberto Carlos had in the World Cup was that half his crosses were overhit. This was probably due to the lighter Adidas football that was used. His free-kicks also never spelt danger. He came to France with an awesome reputation, as the man with the explosive shots.

His swerving banana kick that beat Fabier Barthez in the French goal at the Le Tournoi in 1997 was rated as one of the most amazing free kicks ever There would be a buzz of anticipation every time Roberto Carlos stepped up to take a free kick. But either he shot into the wall or overhit the ball way over the bar.

Also, in the quarter finals, the wily Danes found a way, which other teams later emulated to upset Roberto Carlos before he took his free kick. He takes a run-up of over ten metres, like a fast bowler, for his free kick. One of the Laudrup brothers just stood near him at the start of the run-up and it seemed to disturb his concentration. Thus, in the World Cup, we never saw his fulminating free kicks measured at 150 kms. per hour.

His rise to prominence is similar to so many Brazilian footballers; success in the game enabling quick upward mobility. His family background is modest: the son of a lorry driver at Araras in Brazil. Yet creditably, the riches and glamour have not changed him as a person. He still remains humble, considerate and humane. He supports several charities and has donated many pairs of football boots to less privileged youngsters in Brazil and Spain.

After practise with either Brazil or his club, Real Madrid (Spain), he willingly stays back and signs autograph books. During Ronaldo's moments of physical and emotional crisis, before and after the Final, it was Roberto Carlos who sympathised and supported him the most. He spent time with Ronaldo and helped him recover.



Carlos consoles Dutch player Clarence Seedorf after the semi final

Roberto Carlos was Ronaldo's room-mate for the 55 days they spent in France and pleaded with the Brazilian media for less pressure on the superstar striker. Carlos said, "he's under more pressure than anybody else in the world and all that's happened has left him very depressed....I urge everyone just to leave the boy alone."

Just 25 years old, Roberto Carlos' game could still mature. He started his career with Palmeiras of Brazil and then moved to Internazionale Milan and currently plays for Real Madrid. He first played for Brazil in the 1995 Umbro tournament in England.

France '98 was his first World Cup but somehow he could not justify his advance publicity. He came to France, reputed as the best left-back in the world but, during the tournament, other left-backs Robert Jarni (Croatia), Paolo Maldini (Italy) and Bixente Lizarazu (France) disputed that accolade.

Novy Kapadia, France



MUCH TOO BLOATED.



Many teams who took part in France '98, especially from Asia and the CONCACAF region, were not up to a world - class standard

BY NOVY KAPADIA, FRANCE

IFA's decision to expand the World Cup to 32 teams was designed to encourage lesser nations in the game and provide colour and excitement to the greatest sporting show on earth

The objective was laudable there was a cosmopolitan carnival outlook in France during the tournament However, stark reality reveals that from the Asian and CONCACAF regions, at least, there was a team too many USA in group F, Tunisia in group G and Japan in Group H, scored just once in three matches Sepp Blatter's dream of at least one team from each region making it to the last eight remains a mirage

In the quarter finals there were only teams from Europe and South America, the traditional powers of football Except for North Korea in 1966, Mexico at home in 1970 and 1986 and Cameroon, the first African nation in the last eight in 1990, the quarter finals of all other World Cups have been contested by European and South American countries

The Moroccans celebrate their first goal in the World Cup, against Scotland. They eventually defeated them 3-0. They were unlucky not to go into the second round

Benedict McCarthy of South Africa in action against France. SA showed flashes of brilliance but that was never enough

France '98 revealed that the traditional powers in world football are still dominant. Four out of the five South American teams (only Colombia was eliminated from group G) reached the second round, a success rate of 80 per cent. Ten out of fifteen European teams reached the second round, a success rate of 66 per cent.

The five European teams which went home early were Scotland (group A), Austria (group B), Spain and Bulgaria (group D) and Belgium (group E). Scotland, Austria and Bulgaria were not expected to progress and the only surprise exit was that of Spain.

Despite the much heralded improvement in the African region, only Nigeria made it to the last sixteen. Four nations from Africa were knocked out in the league phase, Morocco (group A), Camerooh (group B), South Africa (group C) and Tunisia (group G). So Africa's success rate was just 20 per cent.

Though it must be said that Morocco in group A and Cameroon (denied a legitimate match-winner against Chile by a dubious decision) were unlucky not to progress. However despite so much hype, African countries under-achieved in France 98.

Nigeria, one of the dark horses of the World Cup were outwitted by a tactically superior, defensively sound, quick on the break, Denmark in the second round. Nigeria made an inglorious exit, losing 1-4 to unfancied Denmark.

From the CONCACAF region, just one out of three nations, Mexico, progressed to the second round—for a success rate of 33 per cent. USA and Jamaica were just not up to the mark.

The leading article in the 'New York Times' aptly summarised USA's indifferent showing when it said, "Say goodbye to the 1998 American World Cup team. It was to soccer what American cheese is to food—bland, formless and ultimately harmless."

COLORSPORT



Stark reality reveals that from the Asian and CONCACAF regions, at least, there was a team too many. USA in group F, Tunisia in group G and Japan in group H, scored just once in three matches



Asia could not repeat their 1994 performance, when Saudi Arabia reached the second round. All the four Asian nations were eliminated in the league phase itself, with only Iran coming third in the group.

Watching France 98 it is obvious that both Asia and the CONCACAF

regions deserve just two qualifying spots in future World Cups.

Africa should also have just three or maybe four qualifying places. The "Bafana Bafana" (boys of South Africa) and Tunisia showed flashes of brilliance and lots of enthusiasm but they were never going to trouble the big boys. Japan, South Korea and Saudi Arabia were all well organised but deficient in the skills of forward play.

Vote bank politics rather than football merit seems to be the main consideration for increasing teams from regions which do not have many world class teams. It is a real chicken and egg situation. If South Africa, Jamaica and Japan do not get opportunities to play in the World Cup they will not progress. Just by playing in France '98, the Reggae Boyz have given a massive boost to football in this delightful Caribbean island. So what is the solution?

Sepp Blatter has already said that in

Nigerians celebrate during their high point of the World Cup. their 1-0 win over Bulgaria

2002 there will be 32 teams in the World Cup So after each region has been guaranteed a certain, fixed number of qualifying spots the remaining contenders from each geographical unit should compete in seeded qualifying groups in which merit (such as their ranking in the FIFA Coca Cola list) rather than boundaries should be the deciding factor In these days of fast air travel geographical considerations should not matter Teams from Asia and the CONCACAF can progress After all very few expected Iran to beat the Australasian champions, Australia coached by Terry Venables to clinch the last spot in France 98

In the initial stages the biggest upset of France 98 was the unbelievable failure of Spain, one of the eight seeded teams to progress to the knock out phase

S PAIN remain the perpetual underachievers in the World Cup Their performance in the 1998 World Cup, will remain a quiz master s delight in the 21st century Name the team which won its last match 6-1 but still could not progress in the World Cup? It was Spain, which beat Bulgaria 6-1 in their last Group D league match but finished third in their group with four points

Paraguay scraped through with five points after upsetting a second string Nigeria 3-1 in another crucial group D tie played at the same time. So Spain in their sixth successive World Cup and tenth overall once again underachieved. Their best performance has been fourth place in 1950. In 1934, 1986 and 1994 they were quarter finalists.

This is a poor record for a country which has two of the best and richest clubs in the world Real Madrid and Barcelona, passionate support for the game and a sound infrastructure to nurture junior talent

Since taking charge in 1992, their coach Javier Clemente has guided his country through 32 World Cup and



European Championship qualifiers with just one defeat. They had an unbeaten streak of 31 victories. Many critics thought they were worth a flutter for the title. For months they had been ranked in the top five in the world. Even the experts rated them highly

Real Madrid's former German boss Jupp Heynckes said, "Spain have the best team in their history I wish Germany had the flair up front like that of Raul, Kiko and Alfonso" They had two of the best defenders in the world in Miguel Angel Nadal and Fernando Hierro Young superstar Raul and Luis Enrique combined style with effectiveness

In the past it had been said that Spain tended to falter because regional loyalties were so important that the players did not gel as a unit and the team was not cohesive However wily coach Clemente had over the years built a strong sense of camaraderie in his squad

He used just 26 players in his qualifying campaign as compared to the 46 fielded by Argentina's Daniel Passarella or the staggering 115 Brazilians, Mario Zagallo capped in three years prior to the World Cup. So this was to be the year of Spain, a team which had strength, speed, aerial

Fernando Hierro of Spain (left) grapples with Denis Caniza of Paraguay. Spain, the dark horses, exited from the World Cup far too soon

power and skill.

With their running off the ball, sound defence and ability to turn defence into attack, Spain were a delight to watch when in full cry, such as in the first half against Nigeria and Bulgaria. They were often compared to a Mercedes with lots of style and wonderful to look at. However, at France '98, they showed their customary, historical temperamental frailty and were incredibly unreliable. They were at times so ragged that they became like a Mercedes with a 50cc engine.

Juan Pedro Martinez, editor of a Spanish newspaper 'Don Balon' says this wayward form stems from an inferiority complex. He wrote, "But our players have never been tough mentally. We lack the Germans' willpower and the Italians' ability to manipulate tense situations. We lose in in our heads before kick off. Spanish legs seem to go when it really matters."

Whether it was lack of mental toughness or sheer misfortune, the Spanish jinx continued unabated in the World Cup. In their opening league tie vs Nigeria, they led 2-1 and were coasting to victory when 36-year-old custodian Andoni Zubizarreta turned a harmless cross from left winger Lawal into his own net. It was both embarrassing and amateurish and justified the complaints of some Spanish journalists who felt that the veteran "Zubi" who had struggled with a knee injury had not recovered.

For the next ten minutes, ghosts of the past haunted Spain. They lost their shape in midfield, needlessly substituted the composed Nadal and conceded another goal (the match-winner), a powerful half-volley by Sunday Oliseh. Lapse of concentration for ten minutes cost Spain a match they should have won or at least drawn.

In their next match against Paraguay, coach Clemente panicked and needlessly made five changes in





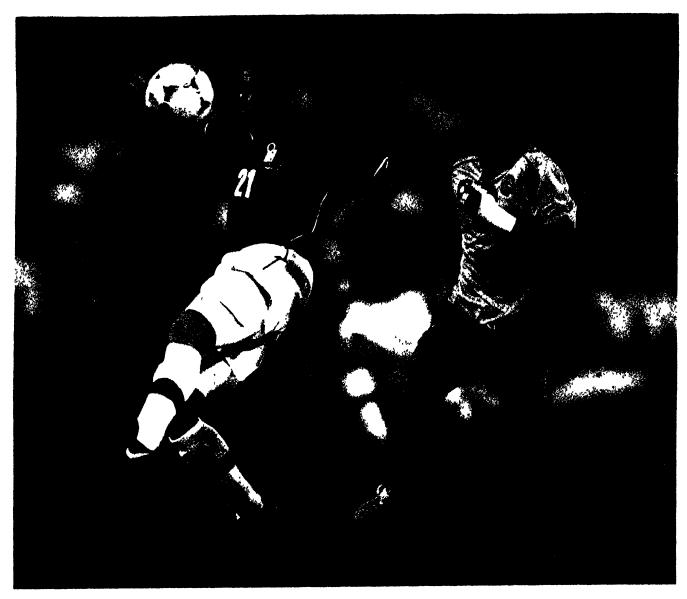
Vote bank politics rather than football merit seems to be the main consideration for increasing teams from regions which do not have many world class teams



his starting line-up. The one player who should have been left out, goalkeeper Zubizaretta (could have been replaced by the in-form Satiago Canizares of Real Madrid) was retained.

Paraguay relied on a packed midfield and defensive tactics. Spain required patient build ups to wear down Paraguay's resistance. Again it was a temperamental failing. Instead of showing variety and flair in attack or trying to get to the byline and sending crosses, they just resorted to hopeful lobs into the box.

Paraguay aided by some marvellous



goalkeeping by Chi lavert hung on tenaciously for a goalless draw. Also except for the last match against Bulgaria, Spain's star player Luiz Enrique was used in the wrong position. This mobile, talented playmaker likes operating just behind the front runners from where he can both distribute and dart into space to get into scoring positions and also function as a useful poacher of goals. Yet against both Nigeria and Paraguay, he was played wide on the flanks.

The lack of a cutting edge led to Spain's downfall in France '98. Also, some of the key players like Raul and Fernando therro seemed fatigued, which could Clemente attributed to

Christian Vieri of Italy (left) in action chased by Rigobert Song of Cameroon. Cameroon failed to sparkle this time and did not even make it to the second round

the demanding nature of the Spanish league and the massive regional rivalries.

NIGERIA'S failing was the old story of intrigue, groupism amongst players and financial dissatisfaction. The players were unhappy with the bonuses offered. The Nigerian Football Association accused their players of being mercenaries who were more keen on money than national honour.

It was also learnt that a few days

before the World Cup began a cabal of senior players led by striker Daniel Amokachi tried to ditch coach Bora Milutinovic. However, the Nigerian president who was to play an important role in this last minute change of coaches died of a heart attack and Bora survived.

However, it caused dissension within the squad. Younger players like Victor Ikpeba who resented the attempted coup against Bora were isolated. Team-spirit sagged and Nigeria again displayed lack of professionalism which led to their downfall. The Super Eagles disappointed their numerous fans and did not do justice to their obvious natural talents.

ONTHE BALL

To make high quality international balls, a lot of hard work goes into it

S witnessed in the first round action involving 48 matches, the official World Cup ball used in the 16th edition in France called "Tricolore", proved to be a headache for goalkeepers, with the exception of the Argentine goalkeeper Carlos Roa. It was less of a pain for freekick specialists and those trying headers.

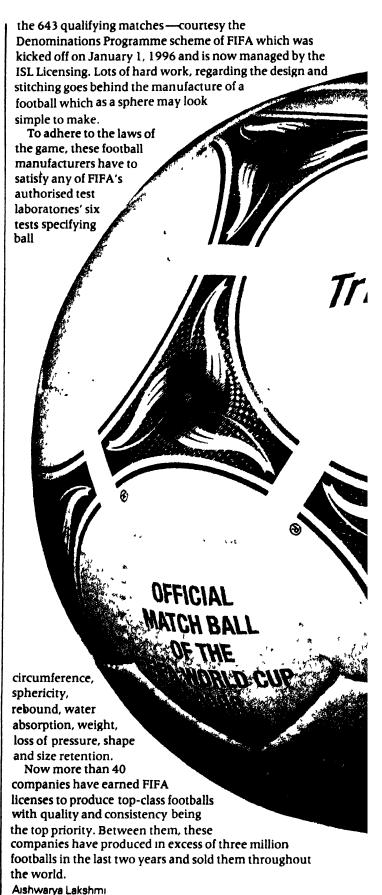
However, Brazilian Roberto Carlos said during the World Cup that he had not been able to make the Tricolore ball swerve as much as he would have liked. This was proved wrong subsequently; David Beckham's effort, a banana freekick that ensured England an insurance goal against Colombia and thereby enabled them to gain an entry into the pre-quarterfinals round, more than substantiated the fact.

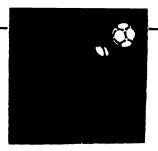
According to the official description of product-makers 'adidas', "The match ball of France'98 features a newly engineered hi-tech foam layer, which improves on the high compression rapid response polyurethane. This new foam material, called syntactic foam, has even better compression and more explosive rebound characteristic, making the ball softer and faster than its predecessor, Questra, used in USA 1994. Moreover, syntactic foam is configured to make the ball more accurate and more durable."

In the maiden World Cup Final in 1930, Argentina used their ball in the first half while Uruguay did so in the second and went on to become the champions. Before a game, referees then used to check the ball which were generally heavy, brown and painful.

However, since the 1970 edition in Mexico where the 'adidas'-manufactured Telstar balls were used, FIFA has made it a rule that only balls with a FIFA Approved or FIFA Tested, or the royalty-free International Matchball Standard insignia can be used in international matches.

The 64 matches in the France '98 Finals were all played with quality controlled footballs, the same as those used in





THE WIZARD OF THE DRIBBLE

DENILSON entertained the crowds at France '98 with his explosive skills but was hardly penetrative for Brazil

RIOR to France 98, Denilson, the dazzling Brazilian winger, was reputed to be the most exciting young player in the world. That title has now been usurped by electric heels, Michael Owen of England.

Denilson has a magical left foot and is like the last of the old-time wingers, in the Garrincha and Stanley Matthews mould, swaying, juggling and jiggling his way down the left flank before sending in measured crosses. However, like all players with flair, he tends to be erratic. He often concedes possession due to mis-timed flicks and excessive dribbling. Also, his defensive work is quite average. The Brazilian coach Mario Zagallo wanted to combine flair with pragmatism. Hence Denilson, much to the surprise of many critics, was not in the playing eleven in any of the seven matches.

He came on as a substitute in all the matches, midway through the second half. Zagallo's ploy was to release him on tiring defences. Denilson did delight with his repertoire of dribbling skills but was seldom very penetrative.

He has the ability to cut in and let fly at goal or send a crossfield pass or beat a defender on his outside, reach the byline and send in crosses. However, his confidence seemed to have been shattered by the lack of faith in his abilities. Denied a free attacking role, his game lacked the dominance that

his skills warranted.

Prior to the World Cup, Denilson was noted for his explosive pace. However, though he showed his dazzling dribbling skills at France 98, the pace was often lacking. Except in the Final, against France, when, after a mazy run, his angular left footer struck the crosspiece, Denilson just did not take enough shots at goal. Still, he always entertained when he came on as a substitute and gave additional width to the Brazilian attack.

Denilson also seemed uncertain of which position he was suited for, Zagallo was impressed by his explosive pace and wanted to use Denilson as a back-tracking winger. This was similar to the role played by Zagallo himself in the 1958 and 1962 World Cups.

In fact, Denilson first played for Brazil on the left side of midfield against Cameroon in November 1996. He was nervous and tentative. Mario Zagallo, nevertheless, gauged that he had the talent to succeed, so he soothed the youngster's nerves and gave him a free role to run at the Cameroon defence and employ his superlative dribbling skills.

Since then, he has become a regular in the Brazilian first eleven and even excelled in the four-nation tournament held in France in 1997.

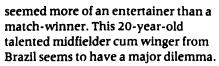
Denilson being chased by Ronald Fuentes of Chile



He seemed destined to be in the starting line for Brazil in all the World Cup matches. But in the warm-up matches before France '98, coach Zagallo started having doubts. Flaws emerged in Denilson's game. It became evident that his defensive qualities were limited. He seemed inhibited when having to drop back and mark his opponents.

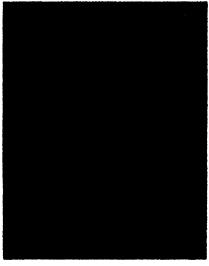
the 0-1 loss to arch-rivals Argentina in a friendly match at Rio de Janeiro in April '98. So Zagallo felt that, temperamentally, he was not ready for the World Cup. Hence, he just used him as a substitute winger in the tournament.

His close control, exceptional dribbling skills, body feints and marvellous left foot brought gasps of His lack of work rate was blamed for | admiration from the crowd but he



He is uncertain whether to just entertain or play more penetrative and combined football. After the World Cup he moved from Sao Paulo to Real Betis of Spain for a world record fee of 21 million pounds. This move will benefit his career.

In the demanding Spanish league, he will be expected to produce results for his middle of the table but ambitious club. Denilson could thus learn to harness his unbelievable talents for the benefit of the team and improve his mental toughness.



Like many great Brazilian stars, he was born in a less privileged home in Sao Paulo. He hitch-hiked to attend training sessions at his club Sao Paulo. He remains a simple and shy person. After his successes in Le Tournoi in 1997, several top European clubs sought his services. However, he opted for the less glamorous Real Betis because of the family-like atmosphere at the club and the warmth by which the fans there welcomed him.

An easy going person, indolent by nature, he relaxes by watching movies or listening to music. At France '98, he frequently visited Disneyland, Paris (in the suburbs) for amusement and relaxation. An ardent admirer of the late Garrincha, Denilson spends hours practising his dribbling skills and body feints.
Novy Kapadia



WORLD CUP STATISTICS

CHAMPION: France RUNNERS-UP: Brazil THIRD: Croatia

COMPILED BY HARIPRASAD CHATTOPADHYAY

FOURTH: Netherlands.

France won the World Cup for the first time. They became the seventh country after Uruguay (1930, 1950), Italy (1934, 38, 82), Germany (1954, 74, 90), Brazil (1958, 62, 70, 94), England (1966) and Argentina (1978, 86) to win the World Cup

Croatia got the third place in their debut World Cup finals. The only other debutant country to reach the semi final was Portugal in 1966

First round	•	126	goals	, in	48	matches
Pre-quarter final	:	23	goals	' ı in	8	matches
Quarter final	;	11	goals	in	4	matches
Semi final	:	5	goals	in	2	måtches
3rd place deciding match	:	3	goals	in	1	match
Final	:	3	goals	in	1	match

Average, 2 67 goals per match.

Goals scored in the tie-breaker are not included in the list.

In 1982, 146 goals were scored in 52 matches; In 1986, 132 goals were scored in 52 matches; in 1990, 115 goals were scored in 52 matches and in 1994, 141 goals were scored in the same number of matches.

THE SIGNIFICANT GOALS IN THE 1998 WORLD CUP

1 st goal : Cesar Sampaio : Brazil vs Scotland, Saint Denis,

10.6.98

25th goal : Luis Hernandez : Mexico vs South Korea, Lyon,

13.6.98

50th goal : Thierry Henry : France vs Saudi Arabia,

Saint-Denis, 18.6.98

75th goal : Mehdi : France vs U.S.A, Lyon, 21.6.98

Mahdavikia

100th goal : Fernando Hierro : Spain vs Bulgaria, Lens, 24.6.98

125th goal : David Beckham : England vs Colombia Lens,

26.6.98

150th goal : Bebeto : Brazil vs Denmark, Nantes, 3.7.98

171st goal : Emmanuel Petit : France vs Brazil, Saint Denis,

12.7.98

Top Scorer:

Davor Suker (Croatia) - 6 goals in 7 matches

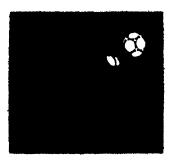
The players who scored 4 or more goals:

Christian Vieri (Italy) : 5 goals in 5 matches
Gabriel Batistuta (Argentina) : 5 goals in 5 matches
Luis Hernandez (Mexico) : 4 goals in 4 matches
Marcelo Salas (Chile) - 4 goals in 4 matches
Ronaldo (Brazil) - 4 goals in 7 matches



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Gabriel Batistuta (Argentina) 3 goals vs Jamaica on 21.6.98 * Batistuta is the only player to score hatricks in two successive World Cups.

HIGHEST NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED IN A MATCH:

Seven goals - Spain (6) vs Bulgaria (1), Group League, Lens, 24.6.98

BIGGEST MARGIN:

5-0: Netherlands vs South Korea, Marseille, 20.6.98

5-0: Argentina vs Jamaica, Paris, 21.6.98

6-1: Spain vs Bulgaria, Lens, 24.6.98

France scored the most goals (15) by any team in France '98

MOST GOALS SCORED BY A TEAM:

France - 15 goals in 7 matches.

FASTEST GOAL:

Ceison Ayala (Paraguay) - 51 seconds vs Nigeria, Toulouse, 24.6.98

THE MOST NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL GOALS IN A MATCH:

Three: Gabriel Batistuta-Argentina vs Jamaica, Paris, 21.6.98

SUICIDAL GOALS:

Tommy Boyd (Scotland) vs Brazıl, Saint Denis, 10.6.98

Youssef Chippo (Norway) vs Morocco, Montpellier, 10.6.98

Pierre Issa (South Africa) vs France, Marseille, 12.6.98

Sinisia Mihajlovic (Yugoslavia) vs Germany Lens, 21.6.98

Tommy Boyd of Scotland was responsible for the first suicidal goal in the 1998 World Cup

THE GOLDEN GOAL IN THE WORLD CUP FINALS:

Laurant Blanc (France) vs Paraguay, Lens, 28.6.98

1600TH GOAL Pierre Issa [own goal] South Africa vs France, Marseille, 12,6.98

1700TH GOAL: Slobodan Komljenovic: Yugoslávia vs U.S.A, Nantes, 25.6.98

TOTAL NUMBER OF GOAL SCORERS AND CUMULATIVE GOALS SCORED

14	riayers	200160	ı	goar	eacn	-	12	goais
23	Players	Scored	2	goals	each	-	46	goals
7	Players	Scored	3	goals	each	-	21	goals
	_		_	_	_			_

3 Players Scored goals each 12 goals 2 Players Scored 5 goals each 10 goals Player . Scored' goals goals

Suicidal goals - 4 goals

108 Players 171 goals



OLDEST FOOTBALLER: Jim Leighton (Scotland) - 39 years old **YOUNGEST FOOTBALLER**: Patrick Mboma (Cameroon) - 17 years old

MOST NUMBER OF APPEARANCES IN THE WORLD CUP FINALS:

Lothar Matthaeus (Germany) 25 matches [Two in 1982, Seven in 1986, Seven in 1990, Five in 1994 and Four in 1998]

PLAYERS WHO PLAYED IN THE MOST NUMBER OF WORLD CUPS:

Karbajal (Mexico) 5 times (1950, 54, 58, 62, 66) Lothar Matthaeus (Germany) 5 times (1982, 86,90,94, 98)

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PENALTIES IN FRANCE, '98:

18 penalties. All were converted except one

1ST YELLOW CARD:

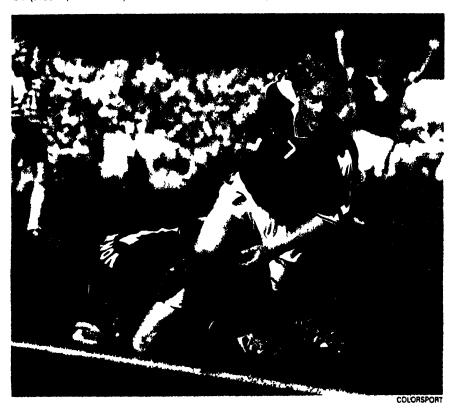
Jackson (Scotland)vs Brazil Saint-Denis, 10 6 98

1ST RED CARD:

Anatoli Nankov (Bulgaria) vs Paraguay, Montpellier, 12 6 98

THE MOST NUMBER OF CARDS IN ONE MATCH:

10 (Red-3, Yellow-7) Denmark vs South Africa, 18 6 98



The Denmark's South Africa Group C match produced the most number of cards 10

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF YELLOW CARDS:

251

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RED CARDS:

22

THE 1ST GOAL IN THE 1998 WORLD CUP:

Cesar Sampaio (Brazil) vs Scotland, Saint-Denis, 10 6 98



Luis Hernandez was the leading goal scorer for Mexico with 4 goals

FEATS:

- Croatia won their debut match in the World Cup finals beating Jamaica 3-1 on 14.6.98 at Lens.
- Robert Prosinecki of Croatia became the only footballer in World Cup history to score goals for two separate countries in the final round: In 1990, he scored a goal for Yugoslavia vs U.A.E. And, in 1998 in France, he scored a goal for Croatia's debut match against Jamaica on 14.6.98.
- Brazil got their 50th victory in their 74th match in the World Cup finals when they beat Scotland 2-1 on 10.6.98. Luigi di Biagio will remember how he used his head to score Italy's 100th goal in the World Cup final rounds on 18.6.98 at Montpellior against Cameroon.
- Iran brought the only victory for Asia in France '98 when they beat the USA 2-1 at Lyon on 21.6.98.
- Including 3 goals in the 1998 World Cup, Juergen Klinsmann's total number of goals scored was 11 in World Cup finals. Only four other footballers scored more than 10 goals in the World Cup final rounds.
- Claudio Lopes (Argentina) scored the 100th goal for Argentina in World Cup final rounds vs Holland in the quarter-final on 4.7.98.

HATTRICKS ON THE SAME DATE:

Gabriel Batistuta (Argentina)-3 goals, vs Greece, Boston, 21.6.94.

Gabriel Batistuta (Argentina)-3 goals, vs Jamaica, Paris, 21.6.98.

Batistuta became the only footballer to score hattricks in successive World Cup finals.

HATTRICKS IN CONSECUTIVE MATCHES:

Sandor Kocsis (Hungary)-3 goals, vs South Korea, Zurich, 1st match, 1954 Sandor Kocsis (Hungary)-4 goals, vs West Germany, Basle, 2nd match, 1954 Gerd Muller (West Germany)-3 goals, vs Bulgaria, Mexico, 2nd match, 1970 Gerd Muller (West Germany)-3 goals, vs Peru, Mexico, 3rd match, 1970

TWO HATTRICKS IN A WORLD CUP:

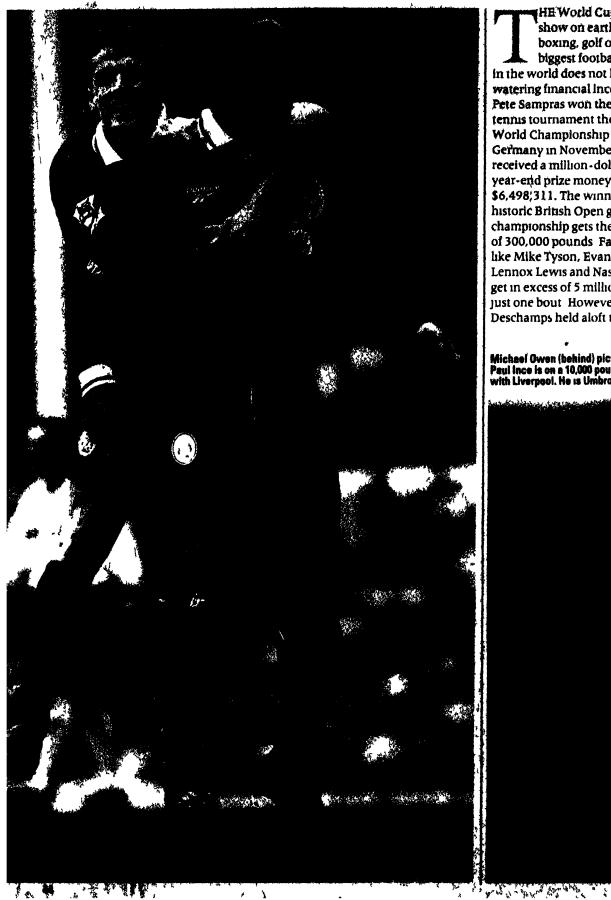
Just Fontaine (France)-3 goals, vs Paraguay, Norcping, 1st match, 1958
Just Fontaine (France)-4 goals, vs West Germany, Gothenburg, 6th match, 1958

TOTAL NUMBER OF MATCHES IN WORLD CUP FINALS: (1930-98) 580

TOTAL NUMBER OF GOALS IN WORLD CUP FINALS: 1755

AVERAGE GOALS PER MATCH IN THE PAST 68 YEARS: 3.02

TOTAL NUMBER OF SUICIDAL GOALS: 21



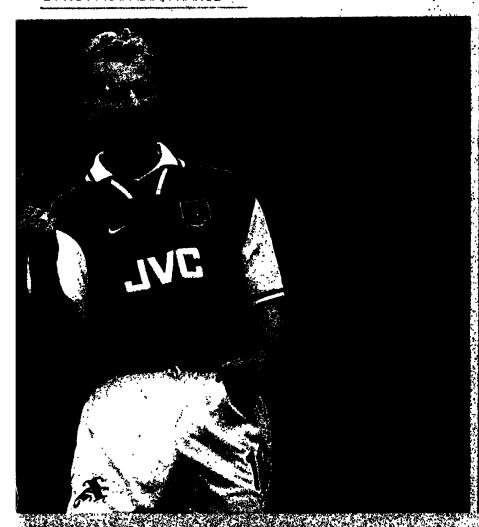
HE World Cup is the greatest show on earth but unlike boxing, golf or tennis, the biggest football tournament in the world does not have mouth watering financial incentives When Pete Sampras won the world's richest tennis tournament the ATP Tour World Championship in Hannover, Germany in November 1997 he received a million-dollar cheque His year-end prize money in 1997 was \$6,498;311. The winner of the historic British Open golf championship gets the princely sum of 300,000 pounds Famous boxers like Mike Tyson, Evander Holyfield, Lennox Lewis and Naseem Hamid can get in excess of 5 million dollars for just one bout However, when Didier Deschamps held aloft the glittering

Michael Owen (behind) pictured here with Paul Ince is on a 10,000 pounds-per-week deal with Liverpool. He is Umbro's No 1 player

GROSSING BIG BUCKS

Unlike most professional tournaments the football World Cup does not hand out winners, cheques to the best players or teams. However, the showing of players and coaches in this tournament decide the contracts that they would negotiate with clubs and sponsors afterwards

BY NOVY KAPADIA, FRANCE



FIFA World Cup he did not receive a cheque along with it.

However, it is not an amateur event. FIFA pays each participating country a fixed sum of money, about a million pounds each and in turn, each country pays the members of its squad a reasonable amount of money. Each of the 67 World Cup match officials was paid 15,000 pounds for the tournament, given free board and lodging and 125 pounds per day for 'pocket money' making a total of about 20,000 pounds for the five weeks.

FIFA can afford to be generous, as the World Cup is the most important single contributor to FIFA's financial success. It is estimated that from Frence '98, FIFA earned about \$500 million. Ascording to Arigela.

Breckentidge who works for accerting the for France '98, after covering at the tournament expenses it estimated at 237 million pounds. The live blue chip companies including address. Budwelser and McDouald's each paid FIFA 20 million pounds for the privilege of beginning afficial sponsors. For most the first sections in the libert was the first sections.

FOCUS

however this initial payment represented only a small part of their world Cup budget.

Adidas are believed to have spent about 100 million pounds on advertisements all over the world and Budweiser's British advertising budget was believed to be more than 15 million pounds. Another of the official sponsors, Snickers spent about 8 million pounds on advertising in the UK. The TV rights for the competition fetched FIFA 84 million pounds. This figure will increase for the next two World Cups at the start of the 21st century. In both 2002 and 2006 A.D., FIFA has sold the World Cup TV rights for 1,6 billion pounds.

The current FIFA president Sepp Blatter feels the increased TV revenue is because of the imminent arrival of pay TV. Thus, it seems that sports-dedicated satellite and cable channels will have greater access to further World Cups than terrestrial TV. So couch-potatoes beware, watching future World Cups will be a costly affair. The growth of revenue for FIFA in the last few decades has been phenomenal. It is best summed up by the former FIFA president Joac Havelange who in an interview said that, "in 1978 the World Cup turnover was around \$88,000, but the 2002 World Cup will generate \$1.6 billion. FIFA has property worth \$100 million and in the next ten years wewill secure more than \$4 billion in the FIFA accounts." FIFA is now a multinational.

The amount paid by each country to its players during the World Cup varies as there are performance based bonuses. For instance, each member of Iran's squad received 3,500 pounds for beating arch political foe USA 2-1 in a group Fleague match. The Nigerian players were negotiating for bomuses worth 20,000 pounds before they were eliminated by Denmark in the second round. Exact figures could not be agcertained as the 32 participating nations in the 1998 World Cup refused to divulge this information. Gordon Taylor, Chief Executive of the Professional otheliers Association of England.

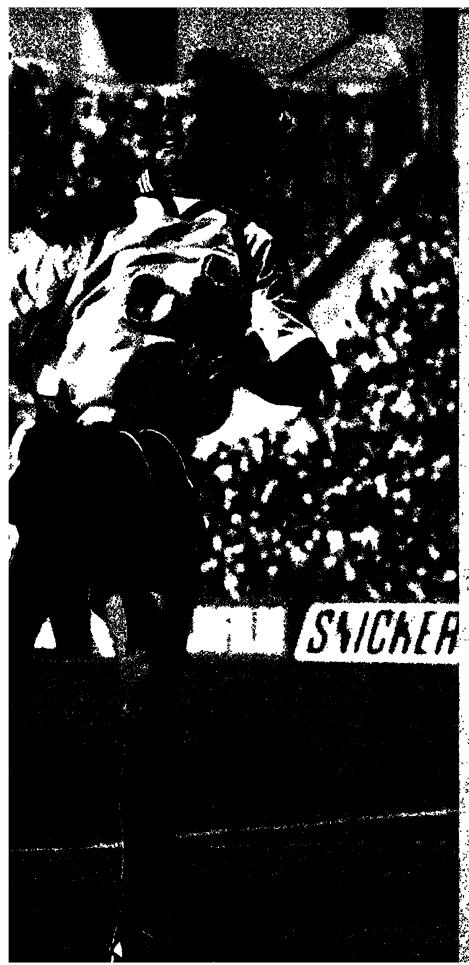
debrie) Bedistate is the highest peril player by the Placeagles club. He eters in commercials that range from cars to choose, sport from said for his club sponsors

said, "the payment to an England player during the World Cup is confidential and cannot be disclosed." Ricardo Teixeira, the CBF president who signed a 10-year-deal worth about 250 million pounds with Nike for the national team also refused to disclose the amount paid to each Brazilian player during the World Cup.

So players do not directly earn a huge amount of money by playing in the World Cup. However, an international footballer's performances in the World Cup could have a great deal of impact on future earnings, with the prospect of transfer deals, increased payment or bonuses from the club or lucrative advertisement deals. For instance, the advertising value of David Beckham, England's glamorous midfielder has dipped for his petulant behaviour in the second round tie vs Argentina, for which he was shown the red card. His contract with Adidas for which he received 1.4 million pounds per year is now being reviewed. Ironically the Adidas billboard which claimed that the England vs Argentina match would be remembered for what Beckham "did with his feet" (a reference not only to his skills, but a snide reminder of Maradona's 'Hand of God' goal in the 1986 World Cup) came true for all the wrong reasons.

In contrast, young star Michael Owen is on the ascendancy after his sensational goals against Romania and Argentina. Owen is on a 10,000 pounds-per-week contract with his club Liverpool, and has a contract with Umbro to wear their boots. Prior to the World Cup, Owen was 15th in the Umbro category behind stars such as Welsh international Mark Hughes (now with Southampton) and England's skipper Alan Shearer. Now Umbro is increasing its incentives to Owen and and he is No.1 in their category of superstars. McDonalds, Coca Cola, Strickers and several other reputed brands are seeking Owen to epolorie dell'orodocti. Liverpoli il





realise that Owen is in heavy demand from the rich clubs in Spain and haly. Hence they are willing to increase his salary, bostos payments and offer him a long term contract.

The following are the world's top 20 carners in injeritational football, according to a report published in the Business Ago magazine. The figures are annual carnings based on salary, endorsements, signing on left and other incentives.

- 1. Ronaldo, 21 years-Brazk (Inter-Milan) 20.5 million pounds
- 2. Denilson, 20 years—Brazil (moved from Sao Paulo to Real Betis, Spain) 18:75 million pounds.
- 3. Rivaldo, 26 years--Brazil (Barcelona) 17.75 million pounds.
- 4. Roberto Carlos, 25 years--Brazil (Real Madrid) 15.85 million pounds.
- 5. Allesandro del Piero, 23 years--Italy (Juventus) 15.25 million pounds.
- 6. Denis Bergkamp, 29 years--Holland (Arsenal) 13.75 million pounds.
- 7. Roberto Baggio, 31 years--Italy (Inter Milan) 10.75 million pounds.
- 8. George Weah, 31 years-Liberia (A.C. Milan) 25 million pounds.
- 9. David Beckham, 23
 years--England (Manchester United)
 8.1 million pounds.
- 10.Alan Shearer, 28
 years—England (Newcastle United)
 7.75 million pounds.
- 11.Paolo Maldini, 29 years--Italy (A.C. Milan) 6.8 million pounds.
- 12.Jurgen Klinsmann, 33
 years—Germany (last season with
 Tottenham Hotspurs but has now
 semi-retired and may play in Major
 League Soccer (MLS) in USA, 5.2
 million pounds.
- 13. Fabrizio Ravenelli, 29 years - Italy (Marseille) 4.4 million pounds
- 14 Giantuca Vialli, 14 years Italy . (Chelses) 3.8 million pounds.
- 13 Gabriel Batistuta, 29 years—Argentinia (Piprentina) 3.25 million pounds
- 16. king Gonzales, 3) years Spain, (Real Madrid) 3.19 million pounds.
- 47 Junatio 25 years Brasil (Allette Madrid: 5 million pounds.)

18. Oliver Bierhoff, 30
years - Germany (Udinnese now
ministratio A.C. Milan) 2 85 million
pounds.

19.Brian Laudrup, 29
years-Denmark (Glasgow Rangers
now moved to Chelsea) 2.25 million
pounds.

20.Romario, 32 years--Brazil (Valencia, Spain) 2.25 million pounds.

Six of the top twenty money earners are Brazilians, five are from Italy, two each from England and Germany and one each from Argentina, Denmark, Holland, Liberia and Spain. However a common factor amongst all these twenty top earners in football is that all of them play club football in Europe. Seven of the super rich play with Italian clubs, six in the Spanish, five in the Premier League in England (in fact, six because Klinsmann was with Spurs till May '98) and just Ravenelli in France.

The big money is with the European clubs, particularly those in the Hallan, Spanish and English leagues, due to massive revenues from satellite TV. football crazy sponsors, club merchandise sales, ticket sales and in some cases the stock exchange. Another common factor is that except for the notable exception of George Weah (whose country Liberia did not qualify for the World Cup finals) and a few others due to injunes all the super rich footballers took part in the World Cup. Of the six Brazilians, except for Juninho and Romario the other four excelled for their country in France '98. Both Juninho and Romario were certainties in the playing eleven but missed out due to injuries.

Of the five Italians three played in the World Cup, Fabrizio Ravinelli was in coach Cesare Maldini's original list vs 22, but withdrew at the last minute time to illness and was replaced by Enrico Chiesa The only Italian player who is on the list but was not considered for the World Cup is Giantica Vialli, at present player manager of the fashionable London club Chielsea, current withers of the Buropean Cup

1.75 million pounds from his club, after tax deduction and with bonuses this could amount to about 2 million pounds. Amongst the top twenty money earners, the only player who did not figure in the World Cup was Liberia's brilliant striker George Weah. However, Weah has managed corporate sponsorship as he was the first African to be nominated World Player of the year, in 1995 and has played for many years for mighty A.C.Milan of Italy.

The top earners get their money from a mixture of salary, sponsorship, endorsement offers, bonuses and investments. Ronaldo for instance is one of Nike's highest paid sportspersons and appears in several of their TV commercials. He wears specially designed Nike boots and kit. In Italy, he endorses Pirelli tyres His annual salary from Inter Milan is colossal Denilson, Rivaldo and Roberto Carlos are all sponsored by Nike. Denilson's left foot was insured for 1 million pounds last year. For the forthcoming season Denilson has been transferred from Sao Paulo to Real Betis of Spain for a staggering 21 million pounds, which makes him the world's most expensive player. His ten year contract is worth 2 million pounds a year to him in salary and bonuses. It is a real rags to riches story for Denilson who is of humble origins and grew up in Sao Bernado do Campo, a sprawling industrial suburb in Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city. Five years earlier he had to beg or steal his bus fares across town to get to training. Now he is a millionaire thanks to football.

Batistuta, affectionately called "Batigol" by his fans is the highest paid player for his club Fiorentina (Italy). He is Argentina's top international goal scorer with 47 goals from 65 matches and earns about 1.75 million pounds per year in salaries and bonuses from his club. He drives a silver Mercedes, figures in commercials for Parmalat, the club sponsors and for several other products from cars to cheese.

Kluivert are with Adidas. The cetchrel

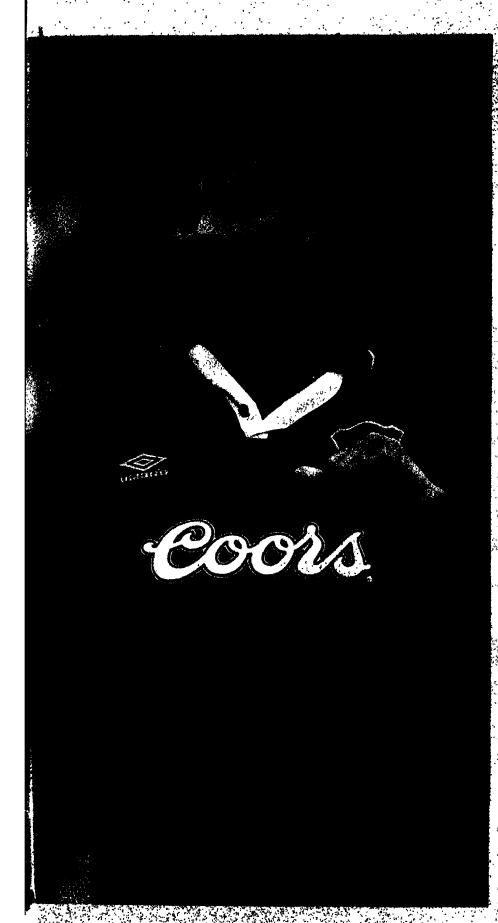
Bergkamp noted for his sublime skills and good boy image is used to advertising a range of goods in Holland, David Beckham is currently receiving 1.4 million pounds a year from Adidas, 1 million pounds from Brylcreem and 1.35 million pounds basic salary besides bonuses and other incentives. Shearer's princely sum comes from various advertising deals with Lucozade, Braun and McDonalds. He also recently signed a 14-year deal worth 25 million pounds

with Manchester based sportswear manufacturer Umbro. However in the Umbro deal, Shearer is now upstaged by Michael Owen.

The money is good when you are in top form but the endorsements start declining with loss of form. Prior to the World Cup, Alessandro del Piero featured in nearly every Italian advertisement, ranging from Adidas to Flat, cars to clothes Similarly Raul was all the rage in Spain. Both these players were popular because of the combination of their sublime skills, movie-star good looks and charisma. However, both these smart young superstars had a disappointing World Cup and thus their corporate image has also partially declined.

The world of advertising for top level sportsmen is very competitive. A player must not only retain form and high ratings but their behaviour must also be impeccable. England's international striker Stan Collymore, who missed out on a World Cup berth because of loss of form recently suffered another major blow because of misdemeanours in his private life. Collymore's 2.5 million pounds boot sponsorship deal with the Italian firm Diadora was cancelled with two years to go of his five year contract, as he was accused of hitting his former lover Michelle Green, mother of his two-year-old child, and his current Swedish girlfriend and TV presenter Ulrika Jonsson. Collymore has lost about 1 million pounds because of his churlish behaviour,

Good performances in the World
Cup can lead to increased selectes
tick
tiom crubs. For instance Denmark's
Estan Landship; a glayer of dazzling

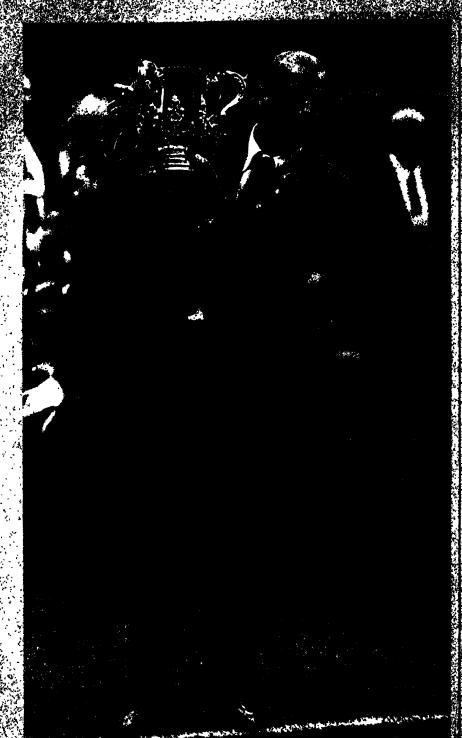


Malland are regards the legarithmy found Suffit to labor over an their new months of the faquantating space. A suffice prompts ready year the path Chellens because they did not raise in much anters to 2 million because

individual skills moved from Glasgow Rangers to Chelses for the 1998-99 season. Also folding him at Chelsea was the solid French defender Marcel Desailly. As both excelled in France 98, they could command majestic pay packets and both will get a staggering 40,000 pounds -per-week from the fashionable London club. There are also fringe benefits for excelling in the World Cup. Italian striker, Christian Vieri received 264 bottles of wine from Italy's National Wine Cities Association (one from each member) for scoring his country's first goal in the World Cup.

Even in the case of managers or coaches, the famous and big clubs pay more for a successful national coach in the World Cup. For instance, Guus Hiddink of Holland got about 200,000 pounds annually as the national coach. However, his success in guiding Holland to the semi finals of France 98, has ensured a lucrative club contract with the mighty Real Madrid for an estimated 1.2 million pounds per annum. Holland wants the legendary Rund Gullit to take over but his salary demands are about 1.5 million pounds per year. When he was the manager of Chelsea he received a similar amount and resigned because it was not raised to 2 million pounds per year.

England's Glenn Hoddle gets 250,000 pounds annually. In contrast Alex Ferguson of Manchester United gets 800,000 pounds per annum and the current League and FA Cup champions Arsenal's French coach Arsne Wenger is paid the handsome sum of I million pounds per year. In fact that is why Glentz Hoddle has refused to confirm with the English P.A. about the extension of his contract beyond the European Championship finals in 2000. The FA wants him to continue till the 2002 World Cup but Hoddle wants more pay. When Argentina's Daniel . Passarella resigned as Argentina's coach after France 98, he was willing



to vosch in either Spaint or England Section his annual income yould be atless ten times more than what he carned when coaching his country.

The question arises that have do some rives make such money to pay such empression salestes. Poorhalf's unimate paymasters are the relevision commanies whose generals dayments are a salest strikes.

gand alone, another 20 Calif pure joined the stock market some achiereng speciacular gallig in the value of their shares. Also the selling of football merchandise is a major. source of income. Manchester United sells more than 1,000 different items through its shops and mail-order. business generating revenues worth 30 million pounds a year. Ticket prices have also risen. Chelsea, which can field a World Cup XI of different nationalities charges the highest price amongst all the clubs. Their season ficket costs 800 pounds per annum and a single match-day ticket is worth 50 pounds.

So in this manner the revenue for some clubs keep escalating. The rise of club football is beneficial for the players, but there is also a danger that one day the European club game rould actipse international football. During France '98; the great Franz Betkenbauer predicted. The European league will come and the top clubs will gain in power. One day, there won't be a national teath as principle. At the mornent the national resurrance of the clubs is getting bases.

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An Exploded Myth

THE World Cup fever is now over and the new champions are France. The myth of Brazil and Ronaldo has been exploded. I do not know why people were going gaga over Brazil. If one looked at the history, one would see that from 1974 to 1990, on five occasions, Brazil did not even enter the semi-final, let alone the Final.

They won the Cup in 1994 due to the miserable penalty kick by Roberto Baggio which went over the crosspiece. It could have been anybody's game. Italy could have won, to say the least.

If one looks at this year's World Cup record of Brazil, you will not find it very convincing either They almost drew with Scotland, if you consider the self-goal by Tom Boyd. They lost to Norway. Okay, they won against lowly-placed Morocco.

Their only convincing win was against Chile when both Zamorano and Salas were a little out of form. This match also revealed the pathetic politics within the team. Sampaio scored the first two goals and when the penalty was awarded to Brazil, Dunga blatantly denied Sampaio the chance to score the hat-trick by asking Ronaldo to take the kick. Their 3-2 win against Denmark was not at all convincing, which they won more due to the fault of the Danes than due to their own credit,

The penalty shootout against Holland could have been anybody's game also. So it is not surprising that they met their bets noire, France, in the Final



Rivaldo being tackled by Stephane Gulvarc'h of France in the Final

and were cut down to size. While Brazil was maintaining a very high profile from the word 'go', France was maintaining a low profile and they crossed the hurdles one by one with flying colours. I think France was a superior team than Brazil during this championship.

A few other points should be taken note of regarding this World Cup. There were too many controversial decitions by the referees. I think the flashing of yellow and ted cards could have been avoided in quite a few cases. Then the quality of the balls was

found suspect when an expert like Roberto Carlos could not even control the ball and his free kicks went wide off the post. A number of goals were missed by various players because the ball was made lighter.

I think the players should have been given at least a year's practice regarding the change in the specification of the ball. Similarly, FIFA should have informed the teams well in advance regarding their decision of tackling from behind.

NIRLPAM NALDAR, . Coloutte.



THE LAST DEFENCE

Goalkeeper CLAUDIO TAFFAREL has represented Brazil with great distinction

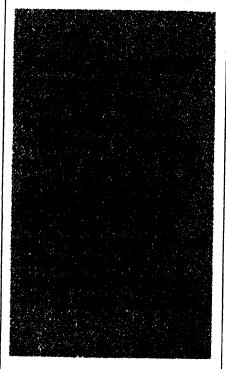
N Brazil, the saying goes that nobody wants to be a goalkeeper and the worst player on the pitch is asked to stand between the posts. This is the tendency from a childhood game in the local park or the beach. Hence, despite their long and illustrious record in international football, Brazil has not produced goalkeepers of outstanding international calibre.

Rarely is a goalkeeper a legend in Brazil. It is either the forwards or the creative midfielders who hog the glamour and limelight. Goalkeepers are the forgotten or much derided men in Brazilian football. In the past, Castilho, of the 1954 team, beaten by Hungary, committed suicide. Barbosa, who failed to save twice against Uruguay in 1950, remains an impoverished outcast within his own country.

The only goalkeeping legend in Brazilian football is their 1994 and 1998 World Cup custodian Claudio Taffarel. He has achieved this status because of his calmness and anticipation in the penalty shootouts. He has, thus, helped Brazil to two important victories.

He was the hero of the penalty shootout win against Italy at the Rose

Bowl Pasedena, USA in the 1994 World Cup Final. In the recent World Cup, he also saved twice against Holland in the semi final penalty



shootout at Marseille to enable Brazil enter the Final for the sixth time.

In the Final against France, Taffarel won his 99th cap for Brazil. Overall, he has been first choice goalkeeper for

Brazil in three World Cups, starting in Italia '90.

His long tenure as Brazil's number one custodian shows the respect successive coaches, from Carlos Alberto Pereirra to Mario Zagallo had, in his ability. Prior to the World Cup, many critics felt that Carlos Germano, the reserve goalkeeper should have been promoted ahead of Taffarel.

28 years old, Germano is a one-club man who has performed consistently for Vasco da Gama for the last four years. However, Zagallo opted for experience and preferred Taffarel to Germano. In the build-up to the World Cup, Taffarel's form was shaky but Zagallo felt that his international experience was invaluable.

Zagallo's faith was justified. In the semi final penalty shootout, he anticipated the shots much better than the highly rated and taller Dutch goalkeeper Edwin van der Saar.

He dived to his left to save an angled try by the left-footed Philip Cocu. Next he refused to be deceived by Ronald de Boer's shimmy and instinctively dived to his right to save the penalty kick. He was thus the hero of the semi final penalty shootout.

Taffarel says he relies on instinct

USE SERVO. OR FACE THE PENALTY.





WORLD CLASS LUBRICANTS.

and knowledge of his opponents to decide which way to dive in a penalty shootout. In the nerve-wracking semi final penalty shootout against. Holland, the much maligned Taffarel played a blinder by diving the right way for all the Dutch penalties.

Frank de Boer and Denis
Bergkamp's penalties were too
powerful and angled to be blocked. In
the Final, he twice blocked shots from
the advancing Stephane Guivarc' h
Taffarel was criticised for not coming
off his line when France scored with
two headers from corners. However,
coming off the line and dealing with
crosses has never been Taffarel's forte

He always concentrates on the anticipation The Final of France '98 is a match Brazilians will like to forget in a hurry But, it was a historic moment for Taffarel He played in his 18th successive World Cup match, equalling the German Sepp Maier's record for goalkeeping appearances in the finals Taffarel has not yet announced his retirement and is joining Galatasaray in Turkey next season

But it is doubtful if he will still be a first choice for Brazil in the 2002 World Cup, as he will be 36 years old then Goalkeepers like Dino Zoff (Italy) in 1982 Peter Shilton (England) in 1990 and Jim Leighton (Scotland) in 1998 have played till the age of 40 years Taffarel however does not see himself playing for so long

He is more keen to earn a record 100 caps for Brazil and become the first goalkeeper in his country to achieve this feat So Taffarel and Sepp Maier's joint record of 18 appearances in the



Taffarel relaxing after a training session during the World Cup

World Cup finals may stay for a long time

His career has not been steady. He started with International and unlike most Brazilians, wanted to be a goalkeeper from childhood. This 1-80 metres tall goalkeeper who weighs 80 kgs. first came into the limelight in the 1988 Seoul Olympics when along with Romario, he helped Brazil reach the final of the Olympic Games.

However Brazil lost to the erstwhile USSR in the final and the Olympic goal mcdal in football remains the one major title that has eluded Brazil After the 1990 World Cup Taffarel moved to Italy and played for a lesser known provincial club Reggiana. He was in Italy for five

years But he somehow could not motivate himself for the league matches and in 1995 though he was the goalkeeper of the World Champions he was a reserve in his club which was in the lower half of the table in Serie A

He grew quite disillusioned and stopped playing for some time. In 1995, when he returned to Brazil, he was severely criticised by the CBF president Ricardo Teixeira and vowed never to play for Brazil again. The canny manager Zagallo persuaded him to reconsider his decision. He started playing for Atletico Mineiro regained his form and reclaimed his national team position. A quiet reserved and thoughtful man. Taffarel likes reading or listening to classical music for relaxation.

Novy Kapadia France

EXTRA TIME. EXTRA MILEAGE. SWITCH TO SERVO.





LONG-DRAIN ENGINE OILS.



At Wimbledon this year, Pete Sampras and Jana Novotna were the cream of the competition, while the others had to be content with strawberries at the All England Club



of ST



(Extreme Left, Top)Pete Sampras looks relieved to have won his fifth Wimbledon title, while Goran Ivanisevic looks dejected to have failed at his second attempt. (Extreme Left, Bottom)Jana Novotna was third time lucky at Wimbledon this year, and immediately after the match crossed over into the players box to embrace her mother Liba (Bottom). (Left)The king and queen of Wimbledon '98: Jana Novotna and Pete Sampras at the Champions Ball at the Savoy Hotel in London



ES and CREAM



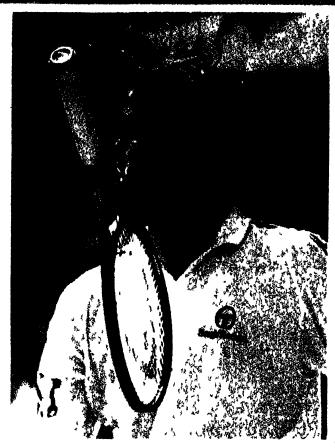




(Left)The ferocity was there but the shots weren't. Venus Williams had to abandon her quest for a maiden Wimbledon title following a quarter-final loss to eventual champion Novotna. Williams argued with the umpire about line call decisions in her last match and was lucky not to be reprimended

(Right)Goran Ivanisevic continues to baffle tennis fans. The temperamental Croat does have the game to win major tournaments and titles, but somehow cannot lift it when the big occasion beckons. Here he flings his racket after a bad shot...another wasted chance

(Bottom)Nathalie Tauziat had her chance to make history by winning Wimbledon. She would have become the first French woman to have won tennis' most prestigious title after Suzanne Lengien But a listless performance in the final saw that chance evaporate in exasperation





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

SYED KIRMANI

Meet the legendary wicketkeeper of yester years

BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

chief manager's job with the State Bank of India where he's busy from 9.30 to 5.30, playing golf for relaxation and to keep himself fit, spending evenings with family members in different ways, attending his cricket academy twice a week, forms part of Syed Mujtaba Hussain Kirmani's normal life these days.

Kiri, as he is better known to the sporting world, himself admits that the significant change in his life, when

Kirmani at his office in the State Bank of India. He is in charge of public relations and customer service





compared to his cricketing days has been the desk work to which he has been confined to. "I'm not used to it and find it very taxing. Of course, I wouldn't go into any commitment that doesn't interest me. I'm enjoying my job, no doubt. But being an outdoor man all through I feel very restless if I sit down for long. I usually stand up to talk to my guests/clients who visit me," says Kiri with a big laugh.

While golf is part of his daily exercise, Kiri is not serious with the game at the moment mainly because of his bank job. Having the portfolio of public relations and customer service banking, Kiri has his hands full. But before starting his day at the bank he finds golf very invigorating, and the greenery at the golf course is a very soothing experience.

"I'm a nature freak," says Kirmani, "in between the tee offs during the

A family portrait of the Kirmanis

nine-hole daily sojourn, I do a little bit of jogging, sprinting and by the time my other teammates follow up, I finish those exercises which are required to keep me going. That's how I keep myself fit, but I am certainly not as fit as during my playing days."

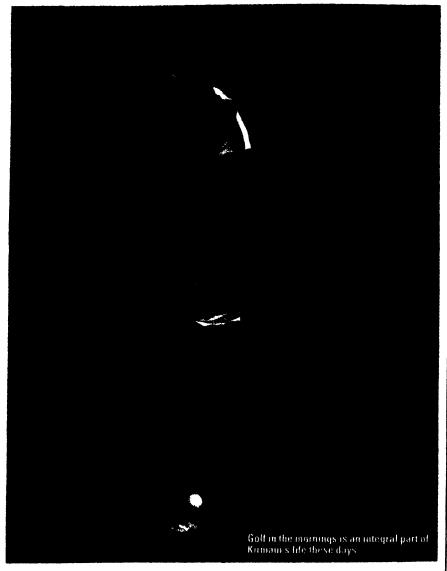
Kiri reasoned out why most of the cricketers are taking to golf after retirement. "We've found this game very scientific and healthy. From the point of exercise, fresh air and greenery it's exciting. We thought (before taking it up) that it was an easy game and being cricketers we could swing the ball whichever way we want. But it's very, very scientific," he says.

Kiri quickly pointed out that one has to be very precise in golf and learning the game is not easy. "It's more scientific than cricket. You can get away with a cross-bat shot in

cricket and still get a hundred (laughs). But not so in golf. A minor change in grip or swing or positioning makes a lot of difference."

Kiri is very contented with his family life. He lives with his mother at his Berlie Street Cross house in Shantinagar, Bangalore along with wife Habeeba, and three children. His first daughter Nishath is studying in the 11th standard, the second Mehnaz has just finished her seventh standard exams and son, Syed Mohammed Sadio Hassan Kirmani, is eight years old. Taking his family for a nice drive, stopping at an ice cream parlour or a chaat joint in the Cubbon Park area are his favourite pastimes whenever he finds that watching television or playing carrom with his children boring.

Kiri is fond of his son who has inherited some of his natural instincts. The Kirmanis are encouraging him







both in cricket as well as tennis Wife Habeeba wants Sadiq to take up tennis more senously than cricket Kiri himself drops his son to the Bowring Institute for tennis thrice a week Says a proud Kiri about his young son who has just finished the third standard at Frank Anthony Junior School, "His outstanding quality is that he dives without seeing where he is His father used to see and dive (laughs) He's not bothered about getting hurt or bruised and that's part of his daily school life " In fact, Sadiq was adjudged the most promising cricketer in the under-12 tournament conducted by the Cricket With Kirmani Academy

Playing carrom with his daughters and son is a favourite pastime of Kirmani



Kirmani takes an active interest in the cricket academy that he has formed for young boys and girls

That is the academy Kirmani has floated in Bangalore and he's busy with this commitment too. The two 'something different' his academy did was conducting the under-12 tournament to give a fillup to the talent at the grassroot level, and coaching girls to encourage women's cricket, which remains a neglected area.

Former India player Mamatha Maben coaches young girls at Kiri's academy while in Irfan Sait he has an able second lieutenant Kiri enjoys coaching the tiny tots at his academy Says Kiri, "I was surprised to have boys five years old whose parents insisted that I must take them Believe me, they're unbelievable They're so natural in their approach and it's lovely to watch their mannerisms on the field They're so much into seeing international stars on TV and copy their mannerisms. It is amusing to see them punching the air, doing high fives and pumping their fists."

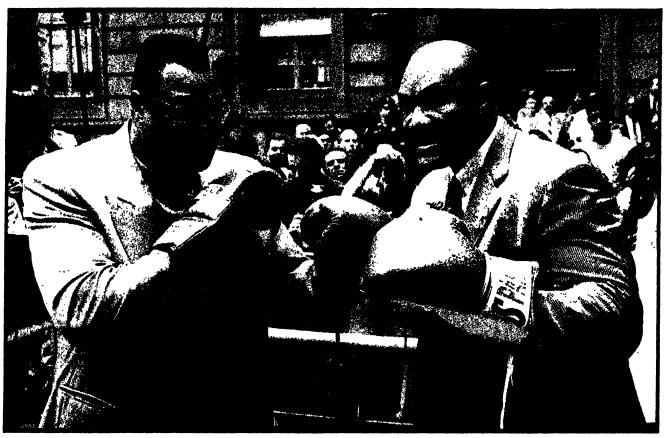
Kiri is always the one looking forward to be associated with cricket in some form or the other. The academy came after a stint as the cricket manager of the India 'A' team when an English team toured here two years ago, and after a commentators' role with Star Sports

Kiri has been the most successful wicketkeeper India has seen His 198 victims behind the stumps in 88 Tests, (both Indian records), is ample proof

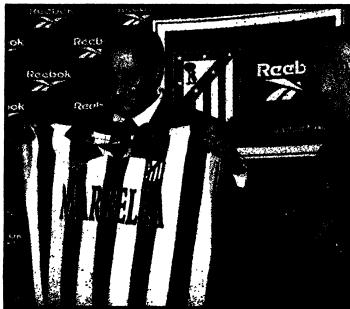
of that and his batting was a bonus to the team We're yet to find another Kırmanı The former Indian stumper while modestly confessing that he didn t do anything extraordinary explains the reason My way of grooming was different from those who followed me Selectors those days used to see temperament, consistency and the principal aspect of an individual before inducting him into any level of cricket, for a minimum of two years Now it's one performance and you are in Thus, there are no quality keepers Of course, there're a few exceptions who are born with a gifted quality But then the authorities concerned should groom them in such a fashion if they want quality keepers," Kiri concluded



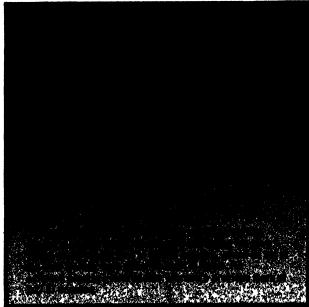
Interesting happenings in the international sports arena













freewheeling

former colleague who had dropped into the office one evening bemoaned the fact that the media had not really paid a worthwhile tribute to Shiny Wilson, who retired a couple of months ago.

Well, for starters, Shiny has to be blamed partly for the timing of it. She announced it on June 8, a mere two days before the start of the World Cup; consequently, there was just no space in the newspapers for a long tribute to her.

But that does not detract from the fact that she, along with P.T.Usha, was one of India's greatest woman athletes. Here's a brief look at her 16-year-long career.

She took part in 75 international meets and won 67 medals. She was the first Indian woman to break the two-minute barrier in the 800m. She was also the first to reach an Olympic semi-final -in the '84 L.A. Games. (Although Usha later outshone her at this Olympics with a fantastic performance). She won Asian Track and Field Championship golds but tragically missed out on an Asian Games 800m gold medal in '86, when she crossed lanes before the designated mark and was disqualified. She won 16 SAF Games gold medals from 1985-95, apart from numerous national titles.

The most surprising thing about
Shiny when you meet her off the track
was that she was so unassuming and
humble. If she was wearing a saree,
you would think that this was an
ordinary Indian housewife, worrying
about the rise in prices of vegetables
and whether her daughter would
come back safely from school.

But what was a clear disappointment was the quality of her voice. It was a little rough, tending towards the masculine. This was in such marked contrast to her sweet-looking face. I remember noticing this aspect when I did my first interview with her, way back in 1989.

The Asian Track and Field Championships were taking place in New Delhi; I met Shiny along with her husband Wilson on the morning of the 800m final at the Athletes Village. This was in a resort-type location at Surajkand in nearby Haryana. She had been married to Wilson Cherian for just over a year. They looked like a couple deeply in love. With giggles and an occasional laugh, they posed for photographer Utpal Sorkar.

There was no doubt that she was media savvy in a guileless way.

She never rebuffed a journalist and politely explained why she could not give an interview at a particular time.

She never spoke ill of the coaches or the other athletes. I don't know what her private thoughts on them were like. She deftly skirted the question of



Shiny Wilson: a great Asian athlete

whether Indian athletes took drugs or not. "I don't know. I don't want to comment on that," was her reply.

And she admonished me gently when I met her in Madras a few years later at her nicely furnished home at the Railway Quarters. I had done a story on former Bangalore-based swimmer Loraine Verghese's sensational allegations of sexual harassment of women by coaches in Indian camps. I asked Shiny whether athletes, like swimmers, also suffered from sexual harassment.

She did not answer the question. Instead, she said, "You did the story and it has become a controversy. But do you know that a lot of young woman athletes from Kerala are having a difficult time getting married.

"As soon as parents of prospective grooms hear that the girl is an athlete and is in a training camp, they think that she must be of a loose character and probably, having an affair with the coach. A lot of heartbreak has occurred because of that story."

She told this to me with eyes so filled with sadness that I felt terribly guilty. Most of the time, I realised, we are unable to gauge the impact of what we write.

On that quiet, sleepy, mid-summer afternoon, as she went into the kitchen to get a cup of tea, I took the opportunity to peer closely into her trophy cabinet. There were rows and rows of gold, silver and bronze medals, trophies, mementoes, and certificates. The number seemed easily in the three figures, probably nearing 200.

In pride of place was the Arjuna Award (and now it must be the Padma Shri which she won in the Republic Day honours this year.) It is only when you see a cabinet like this, that you can really understand the extent of her achievement. (I had the same sense of awe when I saw P.T.Usha's cabinet at her parents' home at Payolli in Kerala.)

Shiny Wilson served her country with a great deal of self respect and dignity. It is true that she was only an Asian champion and made no impact on the international scene. But her deeds were all the more credit worthy because she was just a simple girl from Thodupuzha in Kerala, coming from a middle class family, who had this unexpected nascent talent for running.

Despite that, she was criticised a lot in the media (this writer was one of that ilk) during her career because of her lack of accomplishments on the world scene. In the end, the scribes' rantings have rightfully vanished into the wastepaper basket in people's minds while the exploits of Shiny Wilson are permanently etched in India's athletic history.

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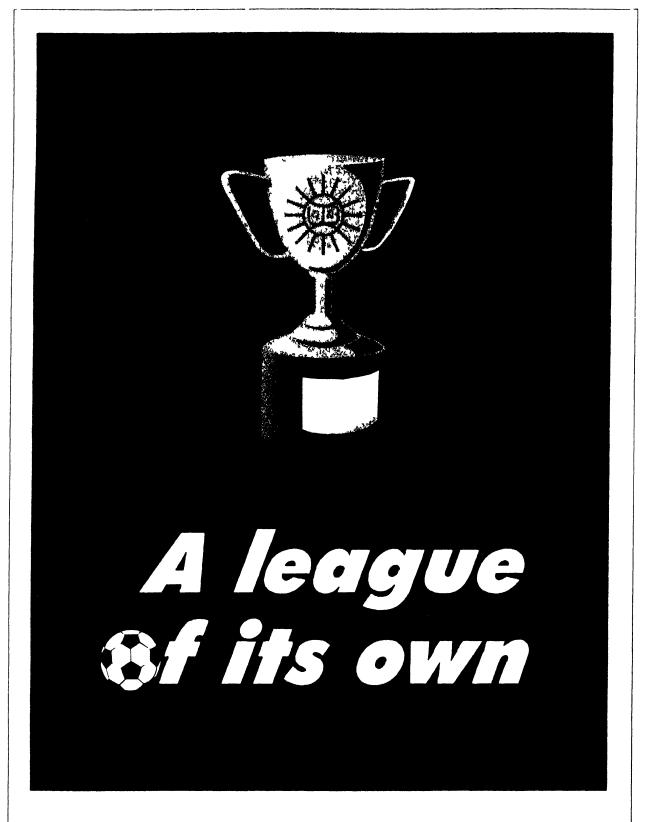
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THE STATE OF INDIAN HOCKEY

Editor: Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF VENKATESH PRASAD BY B.V.VIJAY

DESHKA

The Sahara Cup was started with the express intention of improvirmaintain an excellent relationship, the tournament has so far no

BY INDRANIL MAJUMDAR

RICKET has never depended exclusively on quality for its drama and excitement. The usual twists and turns of the game have been accompanied by the various social economic and political changes that affect a nation. Against this varying backdrop lies the origin of the tension ridden battle of wits between India and Pakistan.

It's not just cricket it's war minus the shooting. Before the World Cup quarter final in Bangalore, a cardiologist at the Federal. Government Services Hospital in I ahore had warned heart patients to stay away from TV sets. The tense final overs might drag them into another heart trouble as a sudden surge in blood pressure is extremely dangerous. The doctor observed.

Sachin Tendulkar has been the centre of india's cricketing fortunes in recent times Here he and teammates applaud Saurav Ganguly The volatile diplomatic relationship the nuclear tests and the exchange of military fire on either side of the border has led to a growing animosity between the two countries

The battle is often dubbed as a test of courage guts and commitment. A defeat here comes close to death. With the renewal of regular India-Pakistan tours still at a prenatal stage citizens of both countries have a lot at stake even if it is played in far away Toronto Expatriates, too, look forward to it as an occasion to renew their national



SAHARA?

lations between India and Pakistan. While the cricketers of both nations lped in improving ties

pride.

The players, though, remain unfazed by all this. In fact, they have always vouched for more cricket contacts in either country. "It is good for the cricketers and good for the two countries as well," former Pakistan manager Intikhab Alam maintains.

Mohammed Azharuddin has always been forthcoming on this issue. "Caste, creed and religion are personal things. It should not harm the human beings as such. If cricket can bring peace and unity between

nations, I will be the happiest and proudest."

Former Pakistan skipper Imran Khan, who is idolised even today in many Indian homes, has always been against the strained relationship and politicising sport.

"I'm against the politics of confrontation...I also completely disagree with the Indian government's sending of troops to

For the Indian expats, tournaments like the Sahara Cup help in fostering a sense of national identity Kashmii. The worst atrocities are committed when an army is sent to civilian areas... It's a political problem which requires to be sorted out across the board. People must appreciate that dialogue can achieve a lot of things.

"With Kashmir, I honestly don't know when things will get better. I personally see it as a very sad scenario...The way we're arming ourselves... We should, instead, be concentrating on human welfare. Both countries whip up hysteria



which is totally unnecessary," he has maintained right through his career.

Newly-appointed Pakistan coach Javed Miandad has also called for a renewal of cricketing ties. "A priority of mine, honestly, is to help improve relations. For that, there's no better vehicle than cricket. Moreover, now that I'm the coach, I'll call for a quick revival of the Test series. To me getting India and Pakistan to resume Test

matches is as important as getting the Pakistan team to be more consistent."

In fact, the bitter memories of that World Cup quarter-final loss still lingers in Miandad's memories. The Pakistanis had sneaked back into their country by the back door as it

Azharuddin has always believed that cricket can play a crucial part in bringing together the masses in India and Pakistan

were, because they feared the atmosphere vitiated by the violent reaction of their countrymen.

Maybe, all the frenzy was heightened by the razor sharp thrust of a knockout situation in which the teams had to perform or perish. But then it was not as if the heavens opened up because India won that day, nor did the skies cave in because Pakistan lost. The reactions to the victory and defeat in the two countries were, however, so exaggerated by the frenetic despair of the situation that the aftermath was not exactly pleasant.

None of the needle edge to the atmosphere in which the teams met in Bangalore, will be felt at the Toronto Cricket, Skating and Curling Club though the annual event has now raised expectations. The players certainly do not have to experience the stifling atmosphere while playing at home or away, and the neutral venue probably makes the game that bit more exciting. Limited overs cricket is a whimsical game likely to be buffeted even more by wild swings of fortune, than the clichetic glorious uncertainties of cricket.

The Indians, with their current form and track record, certainly look to have an edge over Pakistan, dogged by their own internal problems. Azhar's men are confident of sustaining their winning streak and also seem capable of defending the honours they won so convincingly last year.

This Indian side of 1998 seem to negotiate the chicanes with the felicity and skills of a Michael Schumacher in a Formula One racing car. They are coming out of these tight turns in every match, and are racing out of them with a cool nerve.

They won it in Dhaka against Pakistan, then to confirm that it was not just a flash in the pan, they overcame the world champions in another gripping final in Colombo. In between, there has also been the Sachin Tendulkar brilliance that forced the Australians into submission in Sharjah.

Bolstered with possibly the best





opening pair in Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly, the Indians have enjoyed a solid start very often. This, in turn, has made the task of the middle-order batsmen a lot easier. But the real test lies ahead.

The middle-order has often showed signs of fragility, specially in situations when the openers have not got going. It was repeatedly evident even against weak opposition like Kenya and Bangladesh in the triangular series last May. Against stronger opposition this might have fatal consequences.

One of the main reasons for India's success in the Sahara Cup last year was their bowling. The medium pacers had utilised the conditions effectively. A lot will depend on how they live up to their reputation this

When the crowd gets too carried away it's asking for trouble. Here security officers try to cool frayed tempers in the last edition of the Sahara Cup

time.

The stint with consultant Bob Simpson should also come in handy for the Indians. The improvements in fielding and running between the wickets, the two areas the Australian has been paying special attention to, should be all too apparent.

Pakistan cricket, of late, has made more news on betting and match-fixing allegations surrounding the team. Former skipper Wasim Akram has even hinted at retirement.

"What I want from the board is guidance and not constant bickering over betting. I am tired of all this. I wish I could go home and sleep through the period," a disgusted Akram said.

The internal wranglings within the team has prompted Miandad to warn the players against acts of indiscipline in advance. "If the players can't discipline themselves, they have no business to be in the team and represent the country. I have played cricket at the highest level and can figure out from the attitude of the player if he has reached any agreement with any bookie," the new coach warned.

In fact, to impose discipline and get the best out of the players will be the biggest challenge for Miandad and new skipper Aamer Sohail. On it depends the future of Pakistan cricket.



VENKATESH

PRASAD has been

BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI, BANGALORE

in and out of the Indian team for the past couple of seasons.

But that has not

dented his confidence

nor his motivation

KINGOF

ROM a tennis ball cricketer playing in the lanes of Doorvani Nagar in Bangalore where his father worked with the Indian Telephone Industrics (ITI) B K Venkatesh Prasad has come a long way

Hailing from a traditional and religious middle class family—his mother is a housewife and he has three sisters. Though nobody in the nearest family circle played good cricket—Prasad received good support and encouragement from his family members.

when he took to the game on his own

His tennis ball cricket friends then told him to take up leather ball cricket so that he could at least play in the Ranji Trophy But in school there was no cricket team so he had to play hockey and even took part in one of the inter school tournaments. From that humble position to receiving the Ceat International Cricketer of the Year award in its first year of inception is no mean achievement.

Prasad has now got back into the Indian team with his new ball partner and

Karnataka mate Javagal Srinath with whom he enjoys a special relationship. Thus he must now be relieved that the latter's recovery following a serious shoulder injury is complete.

Prior to his departure for Chennai for the first of the World Cup camps, Prasad spared some time for an exclusive interview with Sportsworld. His wife Jayanthi, is a top executive in Titan and the woman behind his success was also present at his Indira Nagar house, busy with their 16-month old son Prithvi.

The following are excerpts from the interview:

Your bowling with Srinath in tandem is more deadlier than you bowling solo or with any other bowler. Why is it so?

I think, that's because we've been playing together for the state and the country for a long time. Srinath has a better knowledge and being more experienced, he keeps telling me what exactly I should be doing on the field. That helps me to gain some knowledge, and to know how to bowl on different wickets. That's the way we work and have succeeded together.

We've also been good friends both on-and-off the field. We share the room together (laughs). And it's nice to have him



SV

around because he's a lively character, full of humour. It's good to be with him.

One of the most significant moments in your career has been the dismissal of Aamir Sohail in the 1996 Wills World Cup quarter final against Pakistan. Can you recollect the event and your feelings? Because that dismissal was the turning point of the match.

I don't think I can ever forget that incident. I think it was all in the game and actually





With his wife Jayanthi and 16-month son Prithvi

everything came out from within ... he hit me for a four, then he showed me his bat, then I got him out, showed him the pavilion. It was all done in good spirits. Of course, that was the turning point of that game. Because Pakistan were cruising very well. After I removed Sohail, we got on to the winning track.

Can you recollect that delivery?

It was, I guess, the fifth ball of that particular over. The first four deliveries, I bowled over the wicket for him. He got a couple of fours in those four balls. Realising that he was a southpaw and his strong point was the cut shot. I switched over to round the stumps to create some sort of confusion in his mind and to keep him guessing about my next delivery. And it happened with that delivery.

Off the field you are known to be an

introvert. Does the media attention and the continuous clamouring of fans get to you?

No, not at all. I mean, the fans or the media have not bothered me so far. The media, in fact, has been very good to me. Basically my character is like that. I would not like to discuss too many things with everyone. My wife being a great supporter of me, I share all my feelings with her alone.

Most cricketers cool off listening to music after a match. How do you relax?

Immediately after a day's game, I think about the match more than listening to music. What exactly happened, where did I go wrong and I try to find answers for that. After that, I stay back in the room, listen to music or watch TV. I listen to old Hindi film songs, basically of Kishore Kumar or Mohammed Rafi.





After Kapil, it was felt that India would not produce fast bowlers any more. Now there is you, Srinath, Mohanty, Agarkar etc. What is the reason for this?

I think the pace academies which have come up in India are encouraging fast bowling especially the MRF Pace Foundation at Chennai They have done a lot of good to my career Even Mohanty was a trainee at the MRF But my only regret is that we don't have good fast tracks. I think such wickets are the need of the hour, so as to encourage fast bowling in India.

You have been in and out of the Indian team. How have you kept up your motivation? Has your confidence taken a battering?

It's a bit difficult to answer But the motivation has to come from within When I was not playing for India I had to really

motivate myself to make a comeback. To keep myself physically fit, I was doing a lot of running weight training fielding practice and I used to bowl a lot in the nets

I even went to Australia through the MRF Pace Foundation And learnt a few things in Adelaide at the cricket academy like the right methods of doing weight training etc. It was very helpful. I never missed the practice during that time and kept doing what I should have

My wife also provided me with lots of motivation. Of course, my confidence level was the same as in the past. It did not take a battering at all

Is the competition for places in the Indian team getting stiffer and stiffer? Will you be able to maintain the Prasad-Srinath combination?

Pictured in his drawing room at Indira Nagar Bangalore

Yes I do agree, the competition is getting stiffer at the top. I feel it is a healthy and good sign. Now it is good to know Srinath is perfectly all right and has come back. It's good to have him back in the side and to bowl along with him. I hope together well do very well once again.

Please tell us something about your married life? Where did you meet your wife? How does it feel to be a father?

I met Jayanthi in the Titan office where she is working. I happened to meet her through a common friend. I mean, that's how everything started and we got married in April 1996. Well, when I was not there in the team I used to spend most of my time playing with my son Prithvi after my routine exercises. It feels really good to be a father. He is very cute and I enjoy being with him.

You were not there when your wife gave birth to your son. Do you feel cricket takes away too much from the players?

Yes cricket does take away a lot from a player But you know being professionals, I think we need to sacrifice a lot of things like staying away from the family during tours and things like that. This was more so when my wife was carrying and I was not there with her. I give all credit to her for taking care entirely on her own. Well, I really missed those precious moments when my son was born.

Is international cricket changing? What do you think of this non-stop international cricket calendar?

I feel, one has to be very fit to play throughout the year Being a professional 1 don t think one should be complaining about the non-stop cricket being played. It all depends on how good a player is mentally and physically. Yes international cricket is changing. But I don't think anybody up there should be complaining about that. They should just get going with the matches.

Who is the most promising among the new crop of bowlers?

Ajit Agarkar is doing very well Of course, D Ganesh is really bowling very well Recently, he has had a few good performances which saw Karnataka through to the Ranji final Mohanty is also doing well

Personality-wise, you are not the prototype of a fast bowler. You don't swagger, you don't sledge, and you don't





even eyeball the batsmen. How do you keep the fires burning in the battle against the batsmen?

Yes, a lot of people have told me that a fast bowler has to have all these attitudes like aggression, staring at the batsman and at times should do a bit of sledging too. But as far as I'm concerned, I feel if a batsman hits me for a four or a six, instead of doing all these things, I would like to go back to my run-up and think 'what went wrong with that delivery, what to bowl at him next, and how best I can get rid of him'. That's my way of keeping the fires burning.

If it wasn't cricket, what would you have done?

I'm not sure of what I would have done. I mean, I have never really given it a thought. I just love this game. Thank God, I have performed well and have done whatever little I can.

Let me put it this way. At what stage of your career did you realise that there was a career for you in cricket?

I played for the Bangalore University team when I was in Vijaya College. After that I joined the Syndicate Bank. I started playing for Karnataka in 1990. Some time later, I played for the South Zone and that was when I thought of making it big in the game. I became more serious with my bowling and worked hard on my fitness and concentrated a lot on fielding.

After cricket what do you plan to do?

I've no idea. I think it's a bit too early for me to answer that, for I feel I still have a few more years of good cricket left in me.

The most difficult batsman to bowl to. And why?

Sanath Jayasuriya. Because he picks the length and line of any delivery, and manages to hit almost every ball. And he's very consistent too.

Among your contemporaries on the international stage, which bowler do you admire the most? And why?

Srinath. He is very good and probably, the fastest bowler India has produced. To have a fast bowler coming from India is something to feel great. I also admire Wasim Akram and Allan Donald. In the past, I always liked Kapil's style of bowling.

HOT CHILE

Chilean MARCELO RIOS is the first South American to be ranked Number One in the world

BY PAUL FEIN

ON'T mess with Marcelo Rios!
Petr Korda cartwheeled in celebration once too often after kicking Rios' butt in the Australian Open final. So Rios cartwheeled Korda right back when he crushed the Czech at Indian Wells and vowed, "Now every time I beat him, I'm going to do it."

As an outstanding junior, Rios felt betrayed and outraged by not getting as much money as he had expected in a tennis grant. So he accused the president of the Chilean Tennis Federation of being a Maíia boss.

Chilean journalists have written unflattering things about him for years. So what does Rios do to tell his side of the story? In an ironic twist, he now writes his own weekly column in *El Mercurio* newspaper.

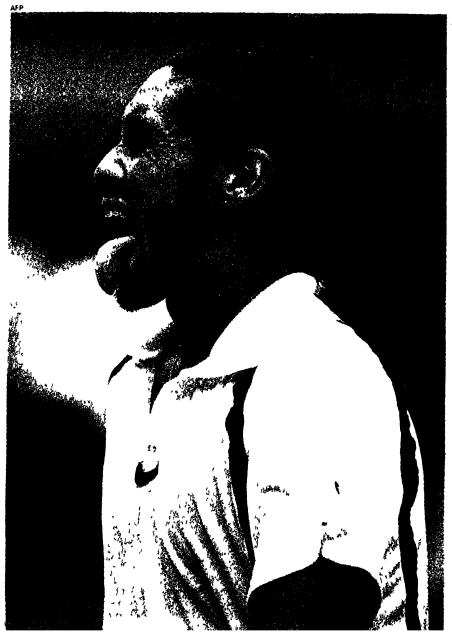
Rios realises that winning is the best revenge, though. Tennis' "Macho Man" has unleashed his pent-up aggression and prodigious talent on the court, and it's really paid off. He finished 1997 ranked No.10, only one spot higher than in 1996, but it marked a breakthrough year by all other criteria.

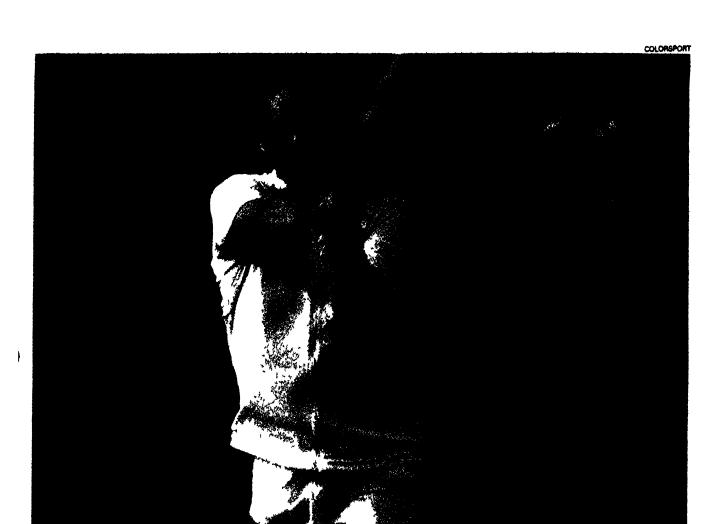
The former world junior champion displayed a rare all-court versatility by becoming the only Tour player to reach the fourth round or better at all four Grand Slam tournaments. Rios also won a Tour title, gained four other finals and racked up a perfect 6-0 record in Davis Cup singles.

Adding an inch in length to his Yonex racket at the start of 1998

provided more firepower and immediately accelerated his momentum. Rios rocketed to the Bell South Open title in New Zealand,

reached his first Grand Slam final at the Australian, and then scorched the opposition to seize the coveted "Super 9" crowns at Indian Wells, the Lipton





Championships and the Italian Open.

After Rios took out Tommy Haas, Goran Ivanisevic, Thomas Enqvist and Tim Henman on the Lipton hardcourts, more than 1,000 impassioned Chileans flew nine hours north to root for their hero in the final. They sang with pride and joy and chanted "Chi-le! Chi-le!" from the cheap seats as Rios beat Andre Agassi, the star he grew up idolising, 7-5,6-3,6-4, at his own high-powered groundstroke game. Afterwards, they unfurled a huge Chilean flag to celebrate the momentous occasion.

The Lipton tour de force dethroned superstar Pete Sampras after a 102-week reign and made Rios the first South American man to rank "numero uno." Back home in Santiago, thousands of ecstatic Chileans poured into the streets and celebrated their rare moment of global sporting glory by blowing trumpets, honking horns, dancing and waving

red, blue and white flags late into the night.

Ten days later, the same excitement and energy filled the presidential plaza in Santiago. More than 5,000 fans greeted Rios with chants of "El Chino, El Chino"—a nickname for his slightly Asian features—as he was received by President Eduardo Frei.

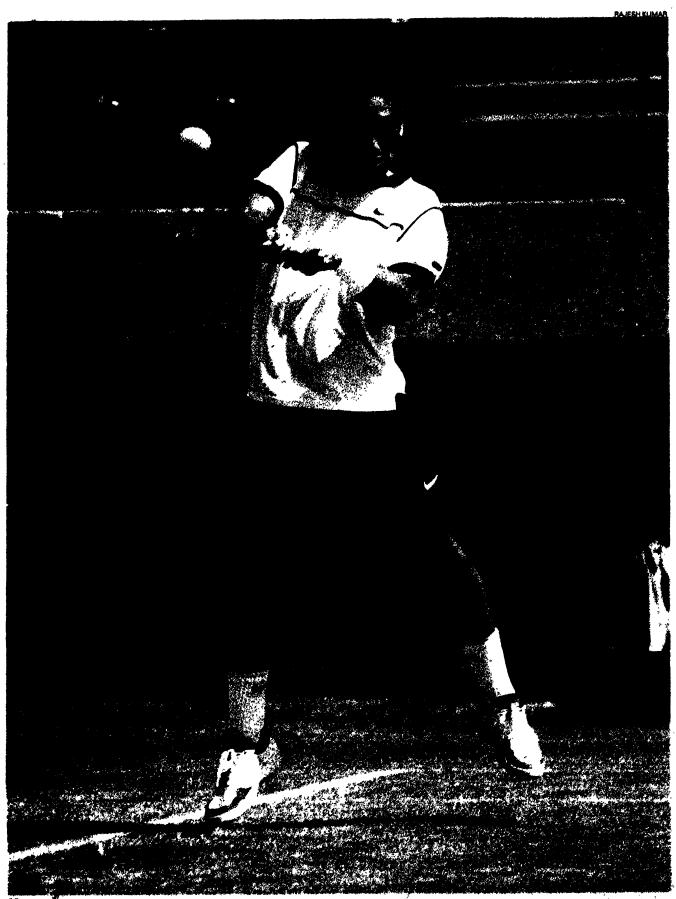
Rios' success means so much to Chile's 14 million people that "Marcelo is as big, if not bigger, than his president," says Larry Stefanki, his American coach. "You won't believe it unless you go down there. When he drives his car, everyone is screaming and honking at every corner, no matter what time of day or night. They go nuts. It's an unbelievable energy."

The media has labelled the controversial Rios "the Chilean Agassi" because of his colourful attire, earring and unconventional pony-tail, plus his penchant for taking groundstrokes on the rise and

whacking them. But Stefanki likens Rios and his "I will say what I think even if it offends people" credo more to another iconoclastic lefty, 1980s, superstar John McEnroe.

"Both are multi-dimensional. They can play in the backcourt, the forecourt, and the net, and both play attacking tennis. They see the court differently from other players, so their shot selection is less patterned and more instinctive, and opponents don't know what they're going to do," says Stefanki, who also coached McEnroe for two years.

"Both are such artists; they aren't power players," says Stefanki. "I joke with Marcelo a lot by calling him Picasso because he can take the pace off a hard, flat ball (shot) and hit angles off it. That's something very special that you can't teach. You're born with that talent. Marcelo is without a doubt the most talented player right now. I haven't seen a guy



as talented as him since Johnny Mac."

Another similarity is that while both delight crowds with their dazzling shotmaking, they are rarely crowd favourites. When a reporter at the 1997 French Open asked Rios if it would bother him to have 15,000 French people cheering against him when he played home-country favourite Arnaud Boetsch, Rios replied: "No, I am looking forward to it. I am at my best when it is just me against the world."

"A lot of great champions have that same me-against-the-world attitude," says Stefanki. "Johnny Mac had it. Connors had it. Nastase was the king of that. They use that energy to their advantage. Marcelo rises to the occasion when all the crowd is against him and uses that as a form of motivation."

Lack of motivation, or to put it bluntly, tanking once stalled Rios' progress, as he is the first to admit. "I just didn't care if I lost the match, even if it was the semis or final," he, acknowledged during the 1998 Australian Open.

Rios' contretemps embarrassed himself and the sport so much that "A lot of guys asked me, 'Why are you tanking?' or 'Why don't you fight?' The more years you are on the tour, you realise that you can win matches even if you are losing."

Peer pressure, heart-to-heart talks with Stefanki and two pivotal 1997 French Open matches transformed Rios from a tanker to a tiger. Down 2-1 in sets against Wayne Black and then behind 2-0 in sets against his brother Byron, Rios battled back for victories and showed he had the right stuff to win even when he was struggling.

In a dramatic turnaround, Rios racked up a superb 6-1 record in five-set duels last year. "It's a tough sport and if you are not quite there, then you can lose to anybody," he said. "You have to be really professional 24 hours a day."

The 22-year-old Rios still walks to the beat of a different drummer, but Stefanki says, "He's turning into a man. When Marcelo was thrown onto the tour as the top-ranked junior in



More than 5000 fans in the presidential plaza at Santiago greeted Rios, as he was received by Chilean President Frei, on attaining the Number One ranking

the world, he had lots of expectations and insecurities. He had a lot to prove to himself. He's matured and learned to take responsibility and deal with losses, which rarely happened when he was a junior."

That newfound maturity helped Rios handle his disappointing 6-2, 6-2, 6-2 thrashing in the Australian final.

"Petr (Korda) played tremendously, but it was one of the rare occasions when Marcelo showed his nerves," says Stefanki. "Writers asked if that is going to gut (traumatise) Marcelo, and I said no. He's only gotten better. That (Australian final) was a motivating factor, a positive, as it turned out."

Although Rios' reign as No.1 lasted only four weeks because he was sidelined with tendinitis in his left arm and couldn't defend a plethora of points, he more than re-affirmed his winter-spring supremacy when he came back to win Rome and St.Polten.

Even with an elbow that "still hurts after I play," Rios took on the far tougher half of the Italian Open draw and routed everyone. Henman,
Thomas Muster, Richard Krajicek and
Gustavo Kuerten all fell in straight
sets, and the injured Alberto Costa
conceded the final in a walkover,

"Guga," the 1997 French champ and a 6-0,7-5 victim, marveled, "It's tough to see where the ball's going. He plays it so deep I can't play my shots. I'm taller, but Marcelo is faster."

But can "Napoleon in Nike"—as a scribe dubbed him for his 5'8", 145-pound physique and \$20 million attire contract—rule a sport increasingly dominated by the brute power of giant players?

"A lot of people seem to think the 6'4" hard hitter is always going to prevail. I've never bought that myself," says Stefanki. "The spins and angles will win in that battle against sheer power. Obviously, you have to have the speed that goes along with that small body. Marcelo has tremendous foot speed as well as hand speed."

Another point worth mentioning is that "Marcelo doesn't play his size," as Agassi conceded after Rios took the ball as early as he did and hit it back harder in the Lipton final.

The Little Big Man needed



considerable convincing, though, before he stopped believing he should hit a lot of aces. During Indian Wells, double Grand Slammer Rod Laver reinforced Stefanki's longtime suggestion and correctly predicted that if Rios strived for more placement and guile rather than power, he would attain No. 1.

Since then Rios has changed his philosophy towards serving and reaped enormous dividends. While it's no surprise that Rios dominates the ATP Tour's service returns statistics, he also ranks first in service games won and second-serve points won as well as ninth in first-serve points won.

Although Rios was raised on soft clay and confides, "Before I didn't want to play on hard courts, even indoors," he now prefers hard courts, on which he's already won three titles

this year. Stefanki believes that the more open-minded Rios serves and returns well enough to conquer grass, too. "If Agassi can win Wimbledon, I know Marcelo can."

Recently, Rios has also shown more thoughtfulness and finesse in his personal life, perhaps as a result of his relationship with lovely Patricia Larrain, a Chilean model and TV personality. The son of a wealthy engineer had an eye-opening experience when he fulfilled an ATP obligation and visited a Memphis hospital during the tournament there. Among the children he met was a Chilean boy who had undergone a heart transplant operation.

When Rios signed the boy's shirt, the youngster began to cry. "Later that afternoon, Marcelo came to me, and he couldn't understand why the kid was so emotional," recalls

Stefanki. "Marcelo is just starting to realise the impact he has on little kids as the biggest sports hero in Chile. He was shocked. And he got very emotional. It was very heartfelt. Marcelo doesn't get very emotional, but that was one of the few times."

After a tournament match the boy was wheeled on the court, and Marcelo gave him a shirt and poignantly put his arm around the boy and comforted him. "It was very touching to me because a lot of people don't see that side of Marcelo," says Stefanki. "He tries to mask that."

Rios may never turn charming and win popularity contests outside of South America. But if more nice-guy stories like this get out, his days as "The Most Hated Man in Tennis"—the title of a slanted Sports Illustrated feature—are over.

SACHIN-SOURAV

COMBINATION S

Are they gothing to be a tegendary one-day opening pairs



TOP BATTING PARTNERSHIP AGGREGATES FOR THE FIRST WICKET

Partners	Runs	For	Inns	No	Avge	Highest Partnership	100	50	0
Greenidge and Haynes	5150	WI	102	4	52.55	192*	15	24	3
David Boon and Geoff Marsh	3524	Australia	88	0	40.05	212	7.	25	5
Aamir Sohail and Saeed Anwar	2513	Pakistan	66	0	38.08	173	3	17	2
Tendulkar and Sourav	2248	India	42	1	54.82	252	7	10	1
Mohsin Khan and Mudassar Nazar	1782	Pakistan	54	1	33.62	141	2	10	2
Gavaskar and Srikkanth	1680	India	55	0	30.55	136	2	11	5
Bruce Edgar and John Wright	1520	New Zealand	43	1	36.19	113*	2	8	1
Andrew Hudson and Gary Kirsten	1510	S. Africa	39	0	38.72	186	4	8	2
Haynes and B.C. Lara	1495	WI	40	2	39.34	175*	5	4	3
Jayasuriya and Kaluwitharana	1353	Sri Lanka	45	0	30.66	129	2	11	1
Jadeja and Tendulkar	1315	India	22	0	59.77	176	5	7	0

Best Opening Stand

	Batsmen	Runs	For Opponent		Date	Venue	
1	Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly	252	India	Sri Lanka	7.7.1998	Colombo	
2	Dipak Chudasama and Kennedy Otieno	225	Kenya	Bangladesh			
3	David Boon and Geoff Marsh	212	Australia	India	7.9.1986	Jaipur	
4	Rameez Raja and Saeed Anwar	204	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	4.2.1993	Sharjah	
5	Rameez Raja and Saeed Anwar	202	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	17.2.1990	Adelaide	
6	Chanderpaul and Stuart Williams	200*	West Indies	India	3,5.1997	Bridgetown	
7	Athey and Graham Gooch	193	England	New Zealand	18,7.1986	Old Trafford	
8	Greenidge and Haynes	192*	West Indies	New Zealand	29.3.1987	Christchurch	
9	Gary Kirsten and MJR Rindel	190	S. Africa	Pakistan	12.1.1995	Johannesburg	
10	Mark Taylor and Mark Waugh	189	Australia	Sri Lanka 12.1.1996		Perth	

Updated till 31.7.1998

BY ANDY O'BRIEN, AUSTRALIA

HANE WARNE was a plump, naive, erratic leg spinner when he nervously debuted for the Victorian Sheffield Shield team back in 1990-91.

His teammates recall the loud music which announced his arrival outside the MCG dressing rooms even before he pulled up in his rusty Cortina.

The love of the loud music hasn't changed, but these days it blares from a convertible, midnight blue Ferrari.

The bloke inside the car also says he hasn't changed

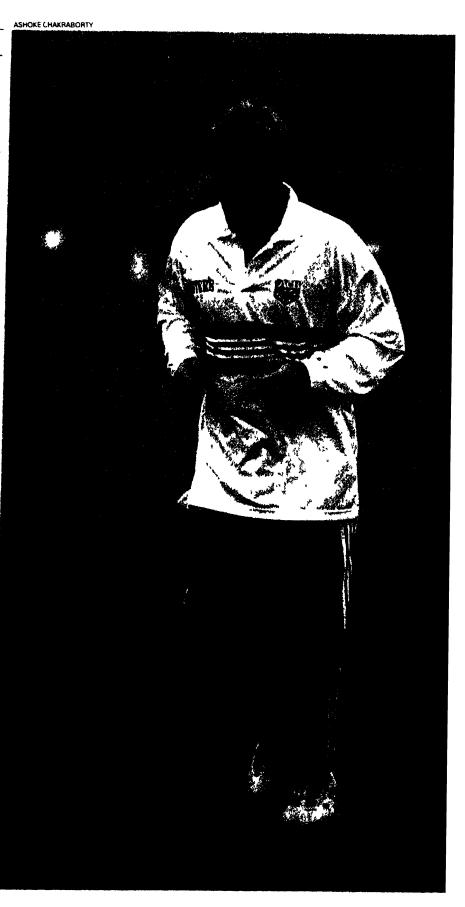
The world's greatest leg spinner maintains he's still an honest loyal teammate who enjoys the simple things in life.

What has changed though is that Shane Warne can no longer walk the streets of Melbourne, or, for that matter, any Australian city, without being mobbed. In a country which loves sport but is somewhat blase about seeing famous people walk the malls or the shopping centres, it is remarkable that Warne attracts such attention and popularity.

He admits there is nothing he

BIDIN

SHANE WARNE is hoping that he will recover from his shoulder operation and be in action by the end of this year



enjoys more than "going to the football (Aussie rules), tucking into a pie with sauce and yelling abuse from the stands."

But life has changed for Warne. It is not as simple as he would like it to be. When he went to watch his favourite Aussie rules football team St Kilda play recently he turned up incognito, with his beanie pulled down, sunglasses on and wearing a long, black jacket.

Does he sometimes wish he could be somebody else on days like that?

"While I wouldn't swap places with anyone in the world," he says, "at times it can be frustrating. I don't mind and never have minded signing autographs; it's just the timing that sometimes can be annoying." Warne's popularity has not merely been an image thing. It's also got a lot to do with his on-the-field achievements.

To most Australians, much of their national team's success over the last few years has been due to the Warne Fear Factor. No other cricketer has made such an impression on the Aussie sports psyche since Sir Donald Bradman. And that's the reason why Warne's shoulder problems and his recent announcement that he may never play again has shocked Australia out of its white flannels.

He is on the talk shows, the news bulletins, the current affairs programs—you name it, he is there explaining his injury and now reassuring people that he will be back.

"Firstly, the surgeons said if I had gone on much longer, I would have done serious long term damage to the shoulder. My cartilege had collapsed, so they had to re-attach it to the bone," he explains.

"I had a tear in my supraspinatus muscle and general wear and tear in the AC joint. The operation is actually called a slaplesion, which is a major operation that no other cricketer has ever had. A few javelin throwers and, more commonly, baseballers have had the operation. Some have made successful comebacks. Others have never played again."

So this is really serious stuff?

"For sure," he replies, "There is a chance I may not play again.
However, I certainly haven't looked at it like that. I was hoping to be right in time for the first Test against the poms in November. The medical opinion at the moment seems to lean more towards after Christmas. One thing is for sure, I won't be coming back until it is 120 per cent. I have to think long term because I want to play for Australia for another five years."

If anything good has come out of all this, it's allowed Warne to spend some 'normal' time with wife Simone and baby daughter Brooke.

"During an eight month period last year," Warne recalls, "we only spent four days at home. You almost have to get to know your wife again."

"Firstly, the surgeons said if I had gone on much longer, I would have done serious long-term damage to the shoulder. My cartilege had collapsed, so they had to re-attach it to the bone,"—Shane Warne

Warne spend most of his time relaxing...where else but at the Shane Warne Room at Melbourne's official All Star Cafe. And therein lies the criticism which every Shane Warne critic likes to repeat. The man is an international sportsman who is overweight, but still manages to live a life of luxury having never put in a full day's work.

Warne has become immune to such criticism, as all champions must be. He laughs it off by saying, "Yes, in fact, I worked for a jewellery store and Mayers department store in the city. My most memorable job though was as the delivery man for Forty Winks bedding store. My best trick was standing at the front door with a

queen-size mattress on my shoulder and ringing at the same time."

Maybe that-was where the shoulder trouble began! But shoulder problem or not, cricket experts still tip him to be the only real threat to Kapil Dev's world record of 432 Test wickets. "I don't really set myself goals of how many wickets. I keep it very simple, and I just want to try my best all the time. Some days it works and some days it doesn't. If 500 wickets was to come along, that would simply be an added bonus," he says.

Shane Warne may not have a timetable for his career even though he targets a "Christmas feast of wickets," but if he were never to play cricket again, not only would it be an irreparable loss to Australian cricket but world cricket would also lose one of its true characters...both on and off the field.

As he recuperates in the Shane Warne Room surrounded by his memorabilia, Warne admits that he sometimes thinks, 'is this really happening to me?'

"The first thing as a youngster was to play, like most other Aussie youngsters, in the Australian Football league," he said, "When I played many backyard cricket 'Tests', I never honestly thought about or aspired to be a Test cricketer. I suppose I was a person who was in the right place at the right time when Australia was looking for a leg spinner.

"When first selected, I seriously doubted whether I was good enough for the Test level. During my debut Test, my coach Terry Jenner challenged me as to what sacrifices I had made to be worthy of wearing the baggy green cap.

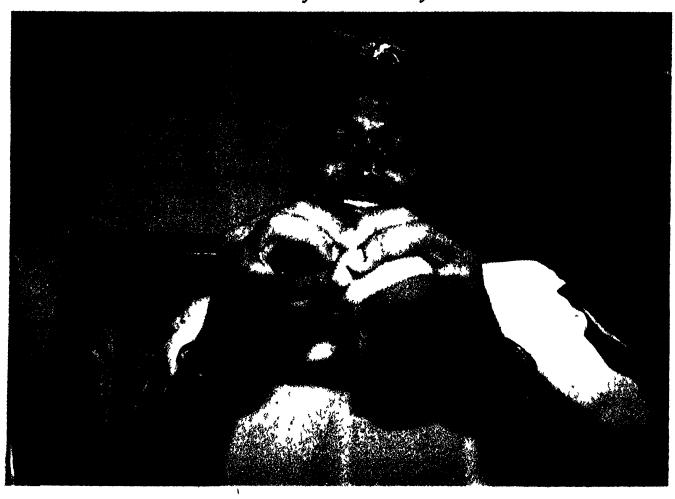
"It was perhaps at that point I decided to make some sacrifices.

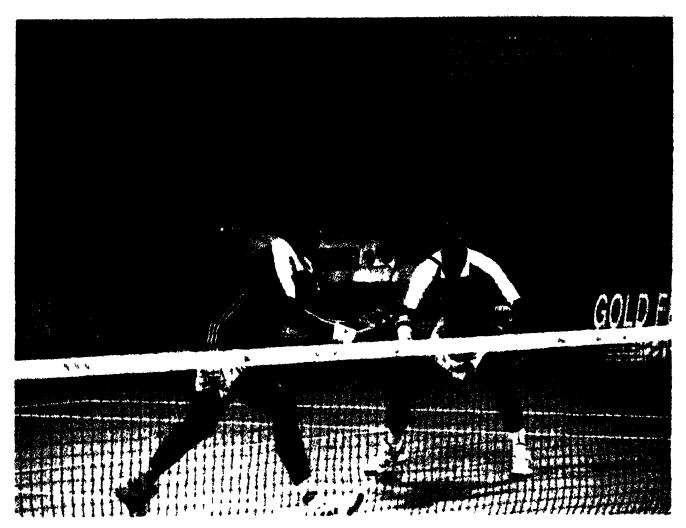
During the off-season that followed, I worked extremely hard at fitness and technique because I knew I wanted to be a Test cricketer. I'd had the taste."

Today, there are many in this country who add Shane Warne's shoulder to their daily prayers. Not bad for a guy who decided that he wanted to play cricket seriously after he had made his Test debut!

The Nottingham

Britain can claim to be favourites against India in the Davis Cup play-off. They have the home advantage, and they also have Henman and Rusedski in the squad. But in Leander, India have a player who is known to pull a few surprises when he plays for his country





S in every sphere of sport, luck of the draw is a major factor in the Davis Cup. The team blessed with the home advantage enjoys a clear 'lead' even before its rivals have had the chance to contest a point. But, as the traditionalists will argue, it's that very element of luck—or ill-luck, as the case may be—which makes this yearly tennis meet one of the most fascinating team competitions in the sporting universe.

The element of uncertainty and the fear of the unknown in alien territory act as catalysts to infuse a sense of challenge in brave-hearted performers, thereby enhancing the charm of this unique competition. Thrown into pressure-cooker situations which test the nerves as much as one's skills, the 'men' emerge unscathed while the 'boys' get buried. These boys come a dime'a dezen, the men from time to time—but it's a

superman we will be dealing with while discussing India's prospects in the ensuing World Group play-off tie against Britain.

Leander Adrian Paes. That's the name which defines an enigma. That's the superman who has carried this impoverished tennis nation to unexpected orbits time and time again. What a contrasting picture his report card depicts while comparing performances on the ATP Tour and off it. He's close to completing eight years on the Tour, and it's only recently that our man from Beckbagan Row has started getting the big results. He won his maiden Tour title in July and claimed the scalp of Pete Sampras last month. He has a career-high ranking no better than 73, a Grand Slam best of a third-round appearance at last year's US Open. Not a match won in three main draw appearances at Wimbledon, Of course, his enviable

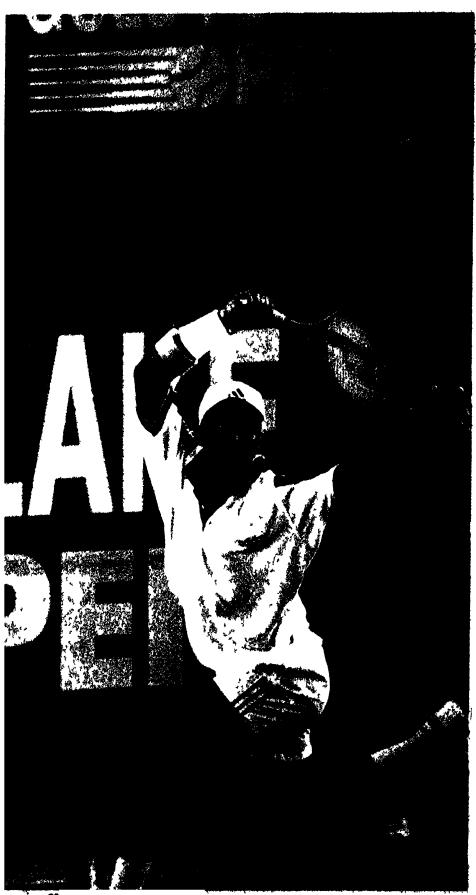
doubles exploits don't count in this process of evaluating a tennis player.

And what have we got from him . when he's been on assignment for the country? Well, what not—an individual Olympic bronze, countless Davis Cup upsets and an endless string of inspirational,

sweat-and-gut-spilling efforts. Bigger the challenge, the more charged- up Leander is for the occasion.

In Davis Cup no test is, of course, stiffer than a World Group tie away from home. With the luck of the draw favouring India more often than not, this decade, Leander has played no more than six away ties—of which only three have been against World Group opposition. The young pro could salvage just one of those ties for his dear country—that famous Frejus conquest in July '93, when he won both his singles against Henri Leconte and Arnaud Boetsch to set up an improbable 3-2 victory on the slow

WORLDOFTENNIS



4

hthire jackedes playe in the Davie Cap he's willing to uptil these and june on the starts. Over the years to have pulled all ingredible when he wants to have pulled all ingredible

red clay courts—but even in the other two. Leander has not returned empty-handed. He and Ramesh Krishnan captured the doubles against heavy odds in Sao Paulo seven years ago, though Brazil clinched all the four singles rubbers. Then, on the clay courts of Pribram last year. Leander gave the Czech Republic team management a sleepless night by beating Jiri Novak on Day One and teaming up with Mahesh Bhupati to claim the doubles the day after for a 2-1 advantage. That the hosts pocketed both reverse singles on the final afternoon-Petr Korda was lucky to come up against an injured Leander—is another story

In a few days' time, Nottingham is the place where India's Davis Cup magician will be out to add another chapter to his golden saga. Apparently, another routine job for Leander, this tie has a special significance in at least three counts.

It is the first time Leander is making a 'comeback' to the team. After being involved in each of India's 20 Davis Cup ties between 1990 and '97, he opted out of this April's World Group first round clash in Italy to recover from a shoulder ailment. Not everyone was convinced about the seriousness of Leander's injury, especially when he played well at Chennal's Gold Flake Open the week following the Italy tie. There were even murmurs, questioning his commitment towards the country. It pained Leander, forcing him to ask why a man who wants to be his country's best Davis Cupper, should skip an important tie deliberately.

The heat and dust generated over that injury issue surely makes the tie versus Britain one to look forward to. Knowing Leander, he wouldn't rest content till he gave his all on the Plexicushion courts of Nottingham. That there would be a physic and a team doctor for the first time on a foreign Cup site, should provide some additional fillip to Leander and

Z,



Mahesh. So Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski, better watch out!

The most interesting facet is the fact that this will be India's first tie on a hardcourt since Leander exploded into the team as a bubbly teenager nine summers ago.

The Britons, armed with a Wimbledon semi-finalist in young Henman, could easily have opted for a grasscourt venue, but chose hardcourt—maybe to deny the Indians their 'strength'. If that was the logic, it's not based on sound judgement.

It is a myth that the Indians' favourite surface is grass. Ask
Leander, ask Mahesh—and they'll tell you that a hardcourt is one they most love to play on. Except for home Davis Cup ties—which are becoming rarer these days—and a couple of tournaments including Wimbledon, our boys hardly get to see grasscourts

Vijay Amritraj imparts some of his immense tennis knowledge to Leander and Mahesh (hidden). Amritraj has always been a strong supporter of Leander

in their hectic travails across the globe. Just like any other tennis pro, they have to ply their trade mostly on synthetic hardcourt surfaces and claycourts. So India's two-man army is definitely not complaining about Britain's choice of surface.

The hosts, without a trace of doubt, have in Henman and Rusedski two high-quality players capable of sweeping the four singles rubbers. And their track record suggests they are very good on hardcourts.

As in the lead-up to all of India's World Group contests, simple calculation again points to a British victory. If not by a 4-1 margin, at least 3-2—taking into account the presence of the world No. 3 doubles

team in Indian ranks and Leander's amazing ability to pull surprises out of the hat.

Not to forget another critical factor which will be driving Henman and Rusedski to perform to the best of their ability—ever since they started donning British colours, neither of them has seen the team qualify for the prestigious 16-team World Group. And they must be aware that it was Leander and Ramesh who inflicted a crushing 4-1 defeat on Jeremy Bates & Co. the last time these two nations met. That, too, was a World Group play-off clash and captain Tony Pickard's dreams lay shattered on the lawns of Delhi's DLTA courts.

It all adds up to a rosy British picture. But, they'll do well to keep the Leander factor in mind. Many teams have underestimated him in the past and paid a heavy price.

FLYING HIGH

Almost from nowhere, VIJAY SINGH of Fiji wins the US PGA Golf Championship

winning a major every time he moved the furniture in hotel rooms to make room for practice. He would think about winning every time he handled a golf club, after he had banished himself to a Borneo rain forest. "Every year, you see somebody walk up 18 and you wonder if that's ever going to be you," said Vijay Singh once.

All that thinking crystallised into reality when the youngest of the four majors—the 80th PGA championship—was won by Vijay Singh.

Here was a man who had been ostracised and shunned by the majority of the professional golf community. It has been a long, arduous journey for Vijay Singh to hell and back —and quite appropriately his victory (and redemption) came at a course whose name translates as "high heavenly ground."

But the high heavenly ground has taken some time in coming for the 35-year-old Vijay. He was originally taught the game by his father and sharpened his skills in Asia and then in

Africa. He is one of the few players who has played in both the American and European tours.

Singh, who has been a winner on the PGA tour before has always been a sort of mystery man. Some found fault with his personality; others with his social graces. On top of it all, here was a man of Indian descent from an island on the Pacific.

He's always had this streak of irresponsibility that did not endear him to many. In 1982, Singh decided that he could do with some mini-tours in Australia. Subsequently, he ran up bills which he never paid for. Not surprisingly, he was banned from competition.

And then in the mid 1980s, he was accused of cheating during the Malaysian Open. Apparently, he had altered the card between the green and the scorer's tent. And before he knew it, he had been suspended from the Asian tour.

Very soon, circumstances forced him to take up a club job as a pro in the middle of a Borneo rain forest. "That was my lowest point," said Singh,
"Out in the jungle, thinking about
what I was going to do next. I don't
think too many golfers have done
that. It taught me to respect the game
a lot more."

But those dark and painstaking hours in Borneo might have laid the ground-work for a better player. In between giving lessons to workers from Shell Oil, he developed a habit of spending hours on the practice tee.

And ever since, the secret of his success has been work and more work. "I have never seen anyone work as hard as that man," Nick Price said after Singh's triumph, "I once tried to spend time hitting more balls than Vijay, but after four hours, I told my caddie I couldn't go on. Vijay was still there."

Vijay's current success can also be attributed to a good caddie. David Renwick, a 45-year-old, is a caddie who had once worked on a North Sea oil rig Renwick has carried bags for Jose Maria Olazabal before and is regarded as one of the best caddies in the world.

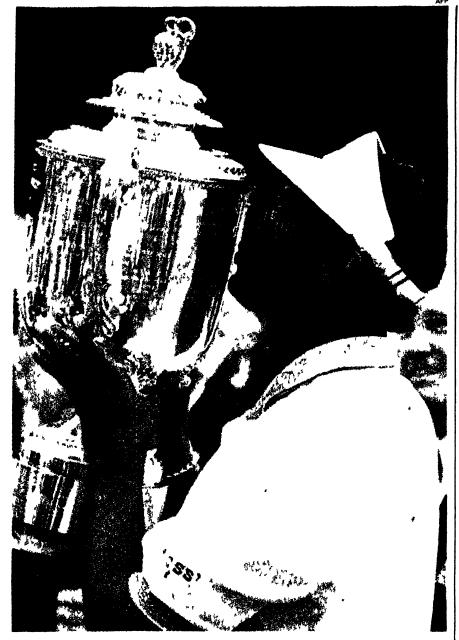
When Singh and Renwick got together 15 months ago, they were immediately christened "golf's odd

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Vijay Singh kisses the PGA Open Golf Trophy

couple,"—a towering Fijian and a small Scottish caddie

The chemistry they share has something to do with the tough times both of them have faced over the years. A few years back, Renwick was the driver in a car-crash in which a caddie friend died amidst the wreckage. The scars from that accident still show. When he caddied for Jose Maria Olazabal, he was often at the receiving end of the player's fiery temper. It was not long before Renwick fired his Spanish master. "No, I've had enough. It's finished. I have my pride," he told Olazabal as he left.

When Renwick took charge of Singh, he was quick to serve him an ultimatum "You'll win nothing unless you change your putting style," said a bashful Renwick, putting his job at risk That advice was at work when Singh won the US PGA championship His putting in the last round of the tournament helped him when he failed to find the fairway from the tee "Vijay has got more natural talent than anyone I've ever worked with," says Renwick now

That is a weighty testimony to Singh's playing prowess, for Renwick's list includes players of the calibre of Steve Elkington, the winner of the 1995 US PGA championship

Singh, who now stays in Florida and London, still finds himself berated by some Fijian P.M Sitiveni Rabuka, who is a long-standing critic, says that Vijay Singh flies the Fijian flag out of convenience But Singh couldn't care less "My dream has come true," says Singh, "What I did was unbelievable"

SERVO REIGNS EVEN WHEN IT POURS.



SERVO' PROTECTS ENGINE. ADDS LIFE.

HEAL THE WORLD!

Australian cricketer Steve Waugh has undertaken a new assignment: the upliftment of lepers children in Calcutta

E was not influenced by Frenchman Dominique Lapierre to devote himself to the cause of lesser mortals. Neither had the charismatic

English ex-allrounder Ian Botham given his rival the lessons to achieve greatness off the field. But Stephen

Steve Waugh with the *Channel Nine* team at the lepers colony in Titagarh

Waugh, Australia's one-day captain, came to India as a missionary, committed to bring smiles on the lips of those innumerable innocent, yet deprived kids. By being the second foreign luminary to explore deeply the stigma associated with leprosy in this country and work for the children of the lepers, Steve has won the hearts of the people of this nation.

For, much before his association with Udayan, Waugh was moved by "the astonishing ability of those kids to smile, brushing aside all the glumness. But only a poor man can know the riches of poverty. Only a poor man can know the riches of suffering....", he explained. With a Canon camera in hand, he has treaded the city —the lanes and the by-lanes, to scrutinise the living conditions. Calcutta, in particular has fascinated him—"from the hand-pulled rickshaws to the trams.



Waugh was accorded a warm welcome by the inmetes of Udayan. This is a project that Steve holds close to his heart

Everything has a novelty. It is a city where the capacity for hospitality has been pushed beyond imagining," insisted our protagonist. "I have seen in Calcutta how people learn, despite incredibly difficult odds, to survive, to share and to love."

He realised that they needed to be loved in return. And, Steve Waugh longed to spread himself among them. The opportunity came. "It was simply superb! I was so happy to see the kids at Udayan." The rest of the account has, in fact, been recited all over the world as the tale of a "foreigner who lost his heart in India."

Steve Waugh symbolises the never-say-die spirit of an Australian. His image holds the combination of fortitude, grit, determination and instinct to kill. Surely, the only element that this gentleman hates is 'defeat'. And perhaps, in life as in cricket, Steve would leave no stone unturned to see that his dreams are realised!

Following are some excerpts from an interview

Why did you select Calcutta as your field of activity?

Calcutta always has had a special place in my heart. This was the city that saw us lift the World Cup in 1987. The cricket ground there (the Eden Gardens) holds fond memories for me. It virtually saw the emergence of a batsman called Steve.

Also, on all seven of my previous visits I have spent much time, interacting with people, with interpreters, learning of their difficulties in a day-to-day existence. I've simply been fascinated by the variety that the city affords. Of course, much later, *The City Of Joy* has provided me with insight into issues one hardly gets to encounter on an organised trip.

When was it that you seriously thought of devoting yourself to charity?



I was deeply moved by the pains of the less fortunate in this land. It's amazing how people tend to become victims of superstitions rooted deep in society. I've had the chance to witness how the kids of the lepers are ostracised without reason. My heart reached out to them. After I went back from India in 1996, following our World Cup campaign, it was in my mind to do something for these kids. Till then I had not seen Udayan but went on a

leprosy mission to Titagarh on that visit. In Udayan I have got a project, that I long desired, to work for. Now it's my turn to do something.

How much has your profession helped to further the cause?

Being well recognised as a cricketer, it wasn't much difficult to convince people on the matter and accumulate funds. In fact the 'Current Affairs' programme to raise money for the

Orang Otang conservation project was watched by many last summer. It raised a whopping \$200 000. I had anchored the show. We plan to air the capsule on Udayan in the same programme and raise funds. It would not be much difficult because people have faith in me whether it's on or off the field. Lot of the companies like Channel 9 and Foster's Lager have joined hands with us to promote this project.

Was the funds collected from Foster's Child Nite at par with your expectations?

Yeah, I believe so! Eleven lakh rupees was not a bad sum People have been extremely nice to respond to our call I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Calcuttans

Back in Australia, how do you Steve Waugh giving away a bat autographed by the Australian team to the winner after an auction

plan to raise money?

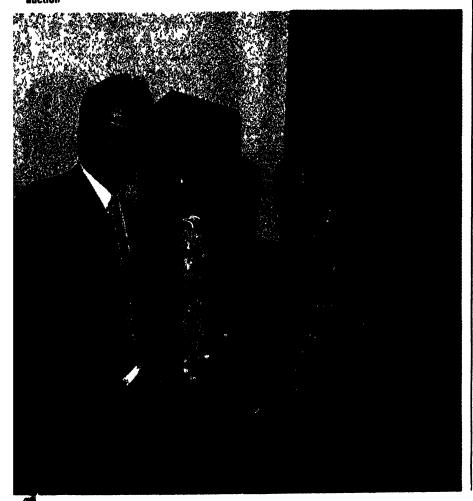
I've spoken to a number of wealthy businessmen about my project Hopefully they'll come to help Besides, Canterbury Rugby League, Foster's Beer and a soccer club is willing to donate a booty

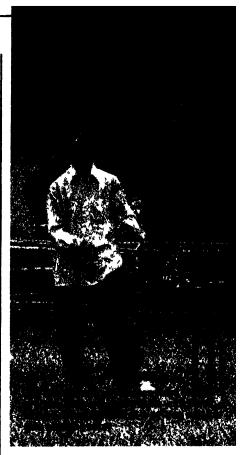
What are your future plans with Udayan?

Future is too far off I've to think of today To give them a better tomorrow the present has to be secure At the moment, the girl's wing is being raised Funds are required for that We are working to assemble those funds

Cricket has taken you round the globe. Have you thought of taking up such a project in any other country?

I have visited the underdeveloped black colonies in South Africa, as well It is not only in India that you find





people in a pitiable state, such wretched conditions are found elsewhere too

When you say that misery is everywhere, you must have also noticed the degree of it in different places

Yes! In this sub-continent you may find the 'poorest of the poor' But hunger has not made them hostile. They we learnt to deal with their difficulties. The lesser mortals here need a bit of help a bit of your kindness to lift themselves from such an unhealthy state.

Charity is a serious business. With the busy international cricket schedule as of today, how do you plan to do justice to your project?

I do agree that charity is a serious business! At the same time I've my international cricketing commitments, too. As a result, the responsibility lies on some of my trusted allies, here in India. They'll take care of my baby. I shall try to make frequent trips whenever I'm free. I'm very serious about my commitments toward. Udayan. I shall



try to extend all help within my powers. Hope Almighty gives us the strength to perform.

How much support do you get from your family?

My family has provided me the necessary support, all through. They've helped me to look beyond cricket. The game is just a part of me. It has surely made me, what I'm today. I owe a lot to cricket. But, at the same time it has also helped me to look beyond its boundaries.

When cricket doesn't go too well, you fall back on your family, they know you so well. Meeting people, in fact, has been my passion. My wife Lilette and my family has always been encouraging towards whatever I wanted to achieve.

Is your brother Mark also interested in your charity projects?

We may be genetically identical, but are different human beings. I don't know whether he would be as interested as me.

What about your Australian team-mates?

Yeah! A lot of them in fact have given me ideas to go about this job.

You must have derived inspiration from someone to devote yourself to such a noble cause...

No, not really. You don't get inspired to do charity, overnight. It's your mental build-up. As I told you, it's the pain and suffering of the children that touched me more than anything else. Nature has robbed them of their laughter. But have you seen that they can smile as brilliantly as any other fortunate kid? My mission is to bring back smiles on those beautiful faces. And I need help from all quarters to do so. Charity cannot be a single-handed effort. It has to come through the consolidated effort of a community.

Has any Indian cricketer helped you?

I had spoken to Rahul (Dravid) and Sourav (Ganguly) for this. Hopefully they'll take some interest.

There must be a huge sum involved in this project. Whom have you entrusted the

responsibility on to see that the sum is not mismanaged?

Many generous souls like Sham Dudeja have devoted their services to Udayan for long. The well-wishers and workers for the project have to take care so that funds are not misappropriated.

What is the difference you saw during your second visit to this home for children, compared to the first?

I'm sorry to say, the conditions have not improved, at all.

Udayan also had received the entire royalties from Dominique Lapierre's City of Joy as financial aid. Couldn't you have worked for a different organisation, when there are thousand others?

On a cricket tour I do not have much opportunity to go off the beaten tracks. The offer to visit Udayan came to me on the fourth and final day of the Test match in Calcutta, in March this year. I accepted it readily. The rest was history, of course. I did not know of Dominique Lapierre's association until I went there. I saw that the grants they had were not enough. Moreover, the construction of the girl's wing was proposed but funds weren't ready. Hence, I got mentally prepared to raise money, for them. I saw that they needed help! Rev. Stephens put forth to me the picture of their state of affairs. Overseeing the matters, I took interest in it. The rest followed.

The generous Britisher Rev. Stephen James established the home for the poor 26 years back, the kind-hearted French writer worked to improve it's conditions, but failed to have much success. Do you think that you will be able to achieve what they haven't?

The answer to your question cannot be given in such a short span. I do not know what is to be achieved out of this endeavour. But pray that Almighty bless them, bless all, for the upliftment of humanity!

Interviewed by Rica Roy

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

ANGEL MARY JOSEPH BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

Meet the athletics star of the Seventies

OR the Asian Games double silver medalist Angel Mary it's a horrible and lonely life these days. The Bangalore-based Southern Railway employee was born on the same day as Sebastian Coe and completes 42

this September 24

She blazed the track in the Seventies with her exploits over the hurdles, the jumps, in the pentathlon Angel Mary is seen running with famed Karnataka athletes Uday K.Prabhu, S.D.Eashan and Irene Saidhana during the '37 School National Games held at Bangalore

and the heptathlon But sadly, now she cannot sit for a long time, is unable to climb and not as flexible as she used to be, because of a serious car accident a head-on collision with a truck

—she suffered last year

"I was told by the doctor who





treated me that if the Railway authorities had not delayed by 10 hours I would have been pertectly OK,' bemoaned the 1979 Arjuna Awardee, 'the Railway Hospital where I was taken to had only a consulting orthopaedist who was not scheduled for a visit the day I met with the accident Of course, I was lucky he came the next morning

Two more hours delay would have resulted in the chopping off my leg due to gangrene. There was no fracture, no cut, no blood loss. As there was only a dislocation of the right hip joint, a close reduction was done by Dr. Rajeev. Naik. If they had done that within an hour or two of the accident I would have been perfectly all right."

A mentally upset Angel now has not been able to take care of her two children—Nikita (Class three) and Natasha Marina Mathew (Class one)—and have left them at the Nirmala Convent Boarding School in Mysore

Her husband Padiyara Chacko Mathew a purchase manager with the Sultan Qaboos University Hospital in Muscat, can only visit India once in eight months which means a day in the life of Angel Mary is not only lonely, but "just horrible"

"Leaving the children away and living alone is terrible "said Angel who seems to have no other alternative Tears rolled down her face as she continued because I ve never lived without them even for a single day Even after the accident I kept them with me They were with ine till September last year when I was on leave After resuming duty, I found it very tough to manage with the children Without a servant it's very difficult and it's difficult to get a good servant too If I do get a good servant, even now I'm prepared to bring them back "

Added to this, Angel is very much upset that the Railways have not given her a sports-connected job

I ve requested them to put me on a sports job. I can forget all this if I'm given what I like. That could be a sort of diversion since my husband is somewhere and my children have now gone to the boarding, 'said. Angel who once held the national records in the high jump, the long jump, the 100 metres hurdles, the pentathlon and the heptathlon during her career.

Angel who finished second in the long jump and the pentathlon in the 8th Asian Games at Bangkok in 1978, quit active sports sometime in 1987 when she last went as an official for an Inter-Railway meet. She was taking care of sports in the Railways until she resumed duty after the birth of her second daughter. That was in 1993 and now she is eager to give back something to athletics which has made her a great name.

Though Angel is remembered as a distinguished athlete, what is little known is that she has made seven

Angel Mary with her two children, Nikita (left) and Natasha

Senior National appearances in basketball—five times for Kainataka and twice for the Indian Railways, once even as captain

As she confessed, monetarily, she is not greedy She is happy with whatever the Railways is providing her But the job satisfaction is not there "After I resumed duty, sports was removed from me for reasons I do not know even though I want to keep in touch with sports and share my experiences with juniors and do whatever I can for the Railways Of course, whenever anyone comes I do help them out though I'm not looking after sports But I would welcome a sports-connected job, for I have done my NIS diploma in athletics in 1979-80 I'm trained in coaching and I feel my experience is not being utilised properly," noted Angel

A senior welfare inspector (grade 1), Angel had approached Suresh Kalmadi when he was the Railway Minister to press her case but nothing happened though there was a directive from the minister

"We being sports appointees are not trained basically for the normal jobs. My nature of work now is to get in touch directly with the employees which being a lady is a little tough for me. With this damaged leg of mine it's really tough," felt Angel

Sadly, Angel's trip to the Railway Sports Control Board in Delhi for selection for the post of assistant sports officer could not materialise as, a mere eight days before the interview, she had that gruesome accident

'Of course, the Board was kind enough to offer me a second interview, sometime in April But I had not recovered from the injuries and was still in hospital Now I have requested them to give me another chance. Recently I have given a representation in this regard to the secretary of the Railway Sports Control Board Balkar Singh and even mentioned to him that I'm not aspung for an officer's promotion I



just want an exclusive sports-in-charge post," revealed Angel.

Unlike Shiny Wilson and P.T.Usha, Angel could not continue with her career

even after becoming a mother. "My husband had told me to get back to sports if I was interested. But since he was away I had no one to help me out in looking after Nikita. So, I could not stage a comeback," she said.

Angel still regrets in not having a permanent coach during her athletic career. "I feel unlucky in not having a proper coach. If I had a coach like Nambiar or someone who was prepared to completely dedicate himself to me I think I would have done much better. I feel my talent was not fully exposed. This has been said even by Usha's coach on several occasions." she observed.

Neither at St Paul's Convent in Davanagere nor at the A.V.Kamalamma College did Angel enjoy the support of a physical instructor. It was only when she did a 10-month Certificate of Physical Education course at the YMCA, Bangalore, did she get some good exposure.

"Jayamitra who was the principal then helped me a lot. And there was a Sri Lankan sprinter by the name of Biatrice Bandara. By training with her, I improved a lot. After that, when I joined the Deccan Athletic Club, Bangalore, my athletic career took off. Of course, I cannot forget Sridhar Alva who inspired me the most and was instrumental in my becoming a champion. After Alva, from 1979 onwards it was V.R. Beedu and occasionally G. Somasekharappa who helped coach me," Angel remembered.

In fact, if Angel had listened to Alva's words she would have been a top executive in Vijaya Bank now, for she was offered a probationary officer's post 20 years back.

Angel's dream was to bring a gold for India, at least in the Asian Games. She could not do that due to a very bad back injury that she had prior to the New Delhi Asiad. Recalled Angel, "I

PHOTOGRAPHS B V VIJAY



CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

1974: Seventh Asian Games, Teheran: 5th place in the high jump; Indo Ceylon meet at Ceylon: gold in the long jump and javelin. 1977-78: six-nation meet at Malaysia and dual meet at Singapore: gold in the pentathlon; silver in the 100m hurdles. 1978: Eighth Asian Games, Bangkok: silver in the long jump and the pentathlon. Indo-Russia five-meet series in India: gold in the long jump in all the meets. 1979: Asian Track and Field meet in Tokyo: bronze in the 4x100m relay; 4th place in the long jump and the 400m hurdles. 1960: International meet in Pakistan —gold in the 100m hurdles and the 4x100m relay; silver in the long jump.

1982: Ninth Asian Games, Delhi: 5th place in the heptathlon with a new national record. Six-nation meet in Bombay: gold in the long jump. **1978-79:** Arjuna award. Railway Minister's award.

1981: The Rajyotsava award by the Karnataka government.

Compiled by Aishwarya Lakshmi

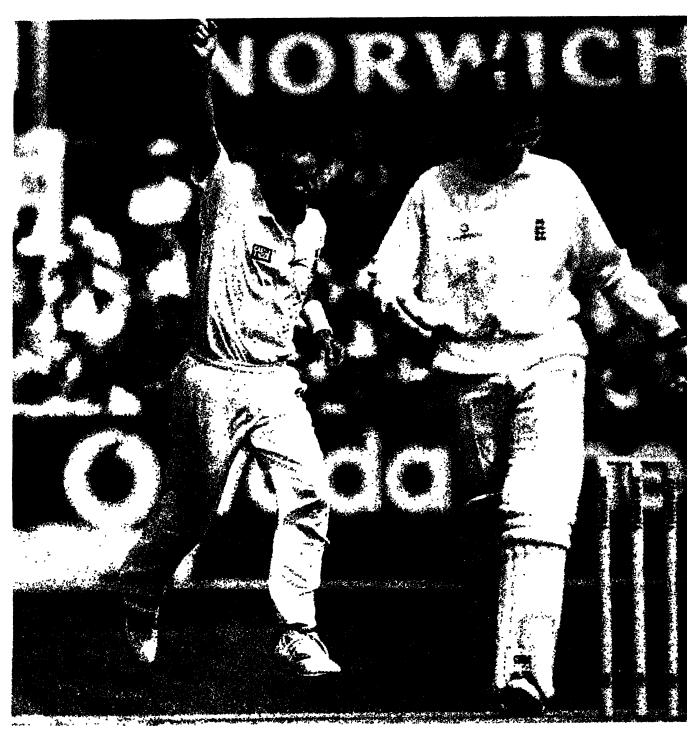
was in the hospital in 1981 for almost four and a half months. I was a medal hope in the 1982 Asiad.

Unfortunately, in the very first event of the heptathlon I got injured in the hurdles.

"I knocked my knee during the trial hurdling and went for a toss. I wanted to discontinue the event but Dr Ahuja who was nursing me throughout the camp for my back and the then sports minister Buta Singh insisted that I continue. Dr Ahuja gave me pain-killing boosters before every event. Still I could create a new national record, finishing fifth. With a little more effort I could have got a bronze, but my knee was giving me lots of trouble."

Talking of the athletics scene in the country after she quit, Angel alleged that in spite of having long camps, which was not in vogue during her time, the outcome is limited: "Lots of changes have taken place as far as encouragement is concerned. These days athletes are having long camps which we never had. We hardly had maybe a 10-day or a fortnight-long camp before any major event. Even in those camps we used to have trials and thus couldn't concentrate. Naturally, if you have not qualified after a particular trials, then you can't continue in the camp. Thus we couldn't do anything much. But these days in spite of having long camps, the outcome is disappointing."

35



HITE Lightning'
Allan Donald was
by far the best
bowler in the
five-Test series, but still didn't belong
to the winning team on his last tour of
England. Hansie Cronje topped the
averages, yet Michael Atherton
grabbed the batting honours. Despite
dominating the first half of the series,

South Africans came out second-best because they lacked that vital extra edge so necessary to see a team through in a closely-fought series.

Close, in fact, would be an understatement. It was a mighty tense duel which England clinched because of a strong will, steeled by the desire to end a 13-year winless streak. Yes, the English hadn't won a five-Test series

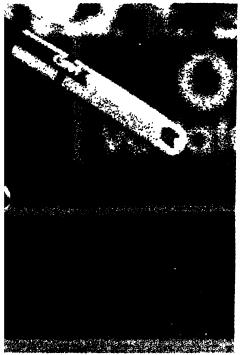
at home for 13 long years!

Lady Luck, too, smiled England's way—in the form of half-a-dozen pathetic umpiring decisions, most of which went against South Africa. In fact, Cronje & Co. would be thoroughly justified in feeling hard done by in the series-deciding fifth and final Test.

The dangerous duo of Donald and

ALITTLE HELP from the DIRE

• England defeated South Africa in the decisive fifth Test to accomplish their first series win in 13 long years



PHOTOGRAPHS AFI

Shaun Pollock cut down England from a flourishing 200 for three to 240 all out, thus leaving their batsmen to get a very achievable target of 219 in the final innings. What followed was sheer mayhem, presided over by Pakistani umpire Javed Akhtar.

Batsmen didn't know what they did to deserve the dreaded sight of Akhtar's index finger. Whether it was

BY AMITAVA DASGUPTA

an incoming ball crashing into the pads off the inside-edge of the bat or an away-swinger eluding the bat en route to the wicketkeeper's gloves, Akhtar issued marching orders to the shell-shocked batsmen. In a matter of minutes on the fourth morning, the South Africans were tottering at 27 for five and staring defeat in the face.

Jonty Rhodes, who came of age as a Test batsman in this series with 367 runs at 52.42 per innings, put up a brave front with Brian McMillan. But the gutsy duo's 117-run sixth-wicket stand wasn't going to be enough against a sharp, three-pronged seam attack which had scented blood. Pollock, who did enough, (146 runs at nearly 30 an innings and 18 wickets at 25 apiece), to substantiate his claims as a top draw allrounder, managed to send a few shivers down English spines, but the inevitable happened some 20 minutes into the final day.

This was not the only Test to be marred by poor umpiring. The four others also had their fair share of dubious decisions handed out by English as well as neutral umpires. Interestingly, the one involving Atherton and Donald, in the final



(Above): England captain Alec Stewart holds on to the Cornhill Insurance Trophy after his team's series victory over the South Africans. (Left): Allan Donald celebrates the fall of Dominic Cork's wicket but the jubilation was premature

innings of the fourth Test, led to a 50-minute spell of the most gripping Test cricket one can ever wish to experience.

Chasing 247 for a series-levelling victory against a highly charged-up Donald, the rejuvenated Atherton

Bad Umpiring Decisions....

...plagued the England-South Africa Test series

FIRST TEST

Mark Butcher survives lbw for 11 in the first innings, goes on to make 77 and shared an opening stand of 179 with Mark Atherton.

Jonty Rhodes given out for 95 in first innings, caught off the pocket of his flannels.

SECOND TEST

Jonty Rhodes survives lbw for 95 in the first innings, goes on to make 117. Alec Stewart given out lbw off a nick for 14 in first innings.

Mark Ramprakash given out caught behind off his shirt for 12 in first innings.

THIRD TEST

Angus Fraser given out lbw outside the leg-stump for 0 in the first innings. Alec Stewart survives catch off glove by Boucher off Adams on 6 in second innings, goes on to make 164.

FOURTH TEST

Jonty Rhodes given out lbw for 24 in the first innings to a delivery that bounced too high.

Mark Butcher survives lbw for 1 in the first innings, then deserves the benefit of doubt for lbw from around the wicket on 75 in the same innings.

Gary Kirsten given out lbw for 6 in the second innings to a delivery that bounced too high.

Jacques Kallis given out caught behind in the second innings to a ball he did not touch.

Jonty Rhodes given out caught down the leg-side for 2 in the second innings to a ball that brushed his pads.

Mike Atherton given not out for 27 to a ball from Donald that brushes his gloves to be caught by Boucher.

Mike Atherton survives plumb lbw appeal to Jacques Kallis on 95 in his second innings.

FIFTH TEST

Mark Butcher caught off the glove by Boucher off Donald in the first innings for 13, goes on to make 116.

Andrew Flintoff caught off his pad at short leg without scoring in England's first innings.

Gary Kirsten lbw to a ball that pitched outside the leg-stump and bounced too high for 6 in the first innings.

Hansie Cronje lbw for 57 in the first innings when he played at full stretch and deserved the benefit of doubt.

Allan Donald lbw for 0 in the first innings off the inside edge.

Mike Atherton lbw for 1 in the second innings off the inside edge.

Mark Ramprakash caught off the glove first ball in the second innings, goes on to make 25.

Gerry Liebenberg lbw for 6 in the second innings after hitting the ball twice.

Daryll Cullinan lbw for 0 in the second innings to a ball missing the leg-stump.

Hansie Cronje given out caught for 0 in the second innings after hitting his pad but not the ball.

Makhaya Ntini lbw for 0 in the second innings to a ball missing the leg-stump.



was at his stoic best in warding off anything aimed at him. He was on 27 when a Donald lifter appeared to have brushed his gloves on way to Mark Boucher.

As Steve Dunne of New Zealand turned down Donald's animated appeal, the agitated quickie gestured to Atherton to 'walk'. The English opener, thoroughly enjoying his batting without the burdens of captaincy, stayed put. Furious at being denied justice, Donald just let go.

For the next three-quarters of an hour or so, Donald was a mad man, charging up as if his aim in life was to behead Atherton. He had something or the other to say to Atherton every time the former England captain saw off a threatening delivery.

It was, without a trace of doubt, the most defining spell of this interesting series. If Atherton hadn't weathered that storm, Donald & Co. would almost inevitably have run through the English batting and South Africa





wouldn't have looked back from that 2-0 lead Indeed, Atherton's series-topping 493 runs (at 54 77 an innings) was one of the key factors behind the renaissance of English cricket

The other significant factor was the coming together of three genuine wicket-taking seamers who could trouble any line up in even remotely helpful conditions —Dominic Cork, making a comeback after an injury-induced 15-month lay-off, the injury-prone Darren Gough, who could play four of the five Tests and bowled a lethal spell in the decider, Angus Fraser, maintaining his new-found consistency by again emerging as the highest wicket-taker Between the three of them, Fraser, Gough and Cork snapped up 59 of the 65 South African wickets that fell to bowlers

South Africa had their chances in the third Test, too In fact, that was one match they should have Extreme left: Angus Fraser celebrates the wicket of Allan Donald, as England head for victory in the Leads Test. (Above): As a line of security people held back the fans, the English players epon champagne bottles in celebration. (Right): Mark Butcher ducks from an Allan Donald beuncer

definitely wrapped up after having England on the mat on Day 5 Forcing England to follow on 369 in arrears, Cronje's men looked set for the kill when Atherton (89) and skipper Alec Stewart (164) committed harakin after a glorious 226-run partnership for the third wicket From the safety of 293 for three the home team slid to 329 for eight—still 40 short of avoiding an innings defeat and enough time for South Africa to pick up two wickets

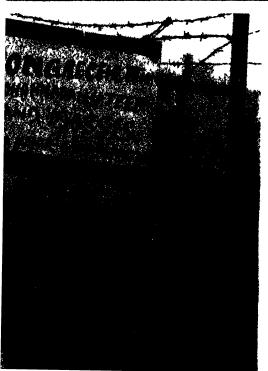
It was then that the world got to see England's newly-discovered never-say-die attitude Robert Croft batted for three hours, Gough stayed put for 72 minutes and Fraser saw off 13 balls from Donald to earn for their team quite a sensational draw A big 'achievement', coming as it did after a demoralising 10-wicket defeat in the second Test at Lord's where they were shot out for 110 and asked to follow on

Those poor essays notwithstanding it was the Englishmen's marginal superiority in the batting department which helped them smile in the end Cronje and Rhodes may have scored loads of runs, but they are still some distance from emerging as classy, match-winning batsmen They missed the run-accumulating consistency of Gary Kirsten, who scored 210 in South Africa's only innings at Old Trafford but could manage only 47 more runs in eight other innings

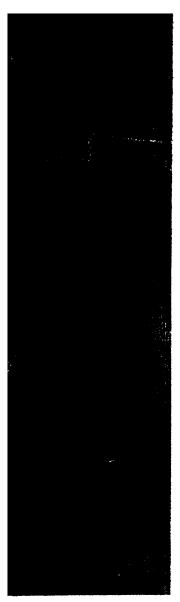
Daryll Cullinan and Jacques Kallis looked to be their best batsmen in the series when they got going For South Africa's sake, these two stylish batsmen need to score heavily more often than they are doing right now



Angry fans ignited the stands of the Mohammedan Sporting ground at Calcutta







(Left): The trouble began when a packed gallery caved in, injuring 170 spectators. This was during a Tata Tee Super Division League match between Mohammedan Sporting and Peerless. The game was barely 20 minutes old, with no goals scored, when the mishap occurred. Angry fans set fire to the stands.

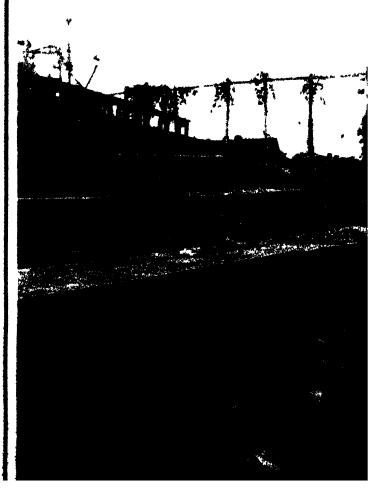
The situation could have turned extremely grave but for the quick presence of mind of a Mohammedan Sporting player Aslam Pervez who managed to open the gates before the stampede began. Ironically, these very stands had been declared safe by the Calcutta police. It took 10 fire engines over two hours to control the blaze. (Below, extreme left). In the midst of all this destruction, even the English language was not spared (Middle) Spectators carry an injured man out of the ground (Below). The Press Box also goes up in smoke





Infrastructural negligence is there in the other grounds also. Picture shows (above) the state of the East Bengal ground, while plants grow freely under the stands at the Mohun Began ground (below) is this Bagan's way of being environment-friendly?

PHOTOGRAPHS ASHOKE CHAKRABORTY



AN EFFICIENT GREENH



INTERVIEWED BY PAYOSHNI MITRA & ALIVIA CHAUDHURI

HE twinkle in his blue eyes and the boyish grin on his face are expressions of innocence personified When he speaks, he does it so softly that even the tape recorder strives to catch his voice But, when Ajit Agarkar starts his run up towards a batsman, the innocence turns into aggression Yet, the 'aggro' is not unbridled aggression Agarkar goes about his job with a smile, and his soft demeanour is the perfect foil because the batsmen fall for it and gifts him their wicket Just a mere couple of months into international cricket and he has proven to be India's latest offering to fast bowling in world cricket Agarkar comes minus an 'attitude' which is so common in men who ply his trade, but has been successful nevertheless He believes in making his kill softly with a smile

Following are the excerpts from a freewheeling interview

How did you begin your cricket career?

Initially, I used to play with other children in the colony where we stayed It was my father, who then put me in a coaching camp with Sir Ramakant Achrekar That's how it all started

When did you think of making cricket your profession?

Ajit Agarker: the latest find in the Indian fast bowling department RN

AJIT AGARKAR might be one of Indian cricket's latest recruits, but he's definitely impressed all by his bowling and his ability in making vital breakthroughs



I basically liked the game and did well in the earlier part, that is, I performed well in the junior levels. That's when I thought of taking up cricket as a career.

You are the fourth contribution of Ramakant Achrekar to Indian cricket, after Sachin Tendulkar Vinod Kambli and Pravin Amre. How do you rate yourself with the other three?

Obviously, they have performed well and have established themselves—although a couple of them are not in the team now. I want to follow their footsteps and perform well for a long time.

If a breakthrough has to be inflicted on the opposition, chances are that Agarkar will do the job

You are bowling so well with the new ball. There is a school of thought that says you are the right partner for Javagal Srinath. How does it make you feel? Feels great. But I haven't played much with him So I will have to wait and

Is there a lot of competition for this position?

find out.

Oh yes. In India, there is a lot of competition for any place in the side.

Do you think this competition leads to unhealthy rivalries? I haven't seen any such rivally here,

I haven't seen any such rivally here, but obviously the competition is there

You are considered as one of the best discoveries of Indian cricket in recent years. How does it make you feel?

It feels great But to reach that level one has to be mentally and physically fit and one has to put in that extra effort.

Fast bowlers are very injuryprone. Take the examples of Srinath, Akram, Younis, Allan

Donald, Dominic Cork etc. Why is that so?

Injury has to be there, as we fast bowlers, work harder than others. But if one is fit enough, I think injuries can be minimised, if not totally avoided.

What are the measures you're taking to keep yourself fit?

I'm into weight training, running and stuff like that even in the off season. During the season, I stick to a few exercises.

Do you think Indian pitches are ideal for fast bowlers?

I don't think so. Few pitches in the subcontinent and in Sharjah are good for pace bowlers. Pitches in Australia, New Zealand and the West Indies are conducive for pace bowling. But you can't really complain. That's how its going to be.

You don't quite look like a fast bowler. Even Sunil Gavaskar has

said that.

It's good to be deceptive. (Laughs).

How do you think you compare to the likes of Ambrose, or say, Walsh?

They are strongly built. I can't compare myself with them. But it's not really in putting on muscles, but on increasing my strength and endurance. I am working on it.

Who was your cricketing idol? I didn't have any idol. But I like Viv Richards a lot.

How did your teammates encourage you when you first got into the team?

They encouraged me a lot. During the first game, they talked frequently to me during the match, which obviously helped me.

Do you think public support is a

help or a burden?

Definitely a great help. Playing in front of 50,000-60,000 people is always great.

How does it feel when your fans pester you for autographs?

It's good They are the people who follow the game. You lose a bit of your privacy, but it's all on track.

Do you always entertain autograph hunters?

I try to entertain most of the autograph hunters, but it's not always possible.

Well, the tour with the Indian A team to Pakistan was really the turning point in your career.

Gagan Khoda was the captain there. How did he help you? It was the first time that I was playing with him. But he helped a lot.

When needed, Agarkar can chip in with his batting and scorn a few useful runs



You also played under Ajay Jadeja in Bangalore...

Ajay is a good reader of the game and he is very helpful

What about Azharuddin?

He is obviously the most successful captain of India and has got the results

Were you always keen on becoming a fast bowler?

Initially I started out as a batsman But there is always greater scope for all-rounders So I started bowling and started getting wickets and my confidence grew

Now, are you trying to keep a balance between your batting and bowling?

Very much Now I am bowling more and have batted just twice But I have to be prepared for batting in a crisis situation

Tell us something about your school, family and childhood.

I m from Shardashram Vidyamandır Presently I m

doing my graduation in commerce

I have a sister who has just appeared for the 10th standard. My mother works for the LIC and my father has his own rubber factory

Has your family been supportive in your choice of a career in cricket?

Very much It was my family who supported me the most

Who are the other people, who initially supported you in taking up cricket as a career?

My coach He taught me what cricket is all about I am employed with Tata Steel They have also been very helpful I went to England with Kailash Ghattami's team The Tatas helped me out there

Did cricket take its toll on your studies?

You can say that Yes The first few years were okay But later it was difficult to find time out for studies

How would you describe yourself



Azharuddın has shown a lot of confidence in Agarkar and has given him the ball on crucial occasions, and Agarkar has not disappointed his captain

as a student?

I am a good student (Laughs) For all these years I have been passing without much trouble Graduation is tough since I don't get enough time to attend college

Does fame intrude into your college life?

No, not fame I ve been famous only for the last couple of months In the morning you have to train and then there is no time left for college

Were you mischievous in childhood? (Though you don't quite look like the sort)

Not really But we used to have fun in school

Do you want to carry on with your studies?

I want to complete my graduation But, then I haven't given it a thought It all depends on how much cricket I have to play in the next five years

How did you feel when you bowled the first ball for the senior Indian cricket team?

I just wanted and hoped to bowl at the stumps

How do you spend your spare time?

I don't go out much I listen to a lot of

music

Your favourite singers?

I like Kishore Kumar (Indian) and in western, quite a few I like the Lighthouse Family

What about your friends?

I have got a few sclected friends Most of my U-19 teammates are my friends Rohan (Gavaskar) and Kiran Pawar (my captain) are two of my close friends

And girlfriends.....

I have a lot of girlfriends but haven t found anyone special

Do you like travelling, or do you feel homesick while abroad?

I like travelling I love Nairobi and the Mt Safari Park (Nairobi) I also like to spend time with my family but cricket is my priority

What is your motto in life?

Enjoy and have fun

Do you think because of cricket you are missing out on something? Few things

Before you got into the Indian team were you disappointed in taking up cricket so seriously? No

What are your future plans?

To play for India as long as possible

A LONG WAY TO GO

That's what Kenya's cricket captain AASIF KARIM feels about his country's prospects

BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

ASIF KARIM the Kenyan cricket captain who has his own insurance brokerage business has a tough task on hand. Having been appointed the national team captain up to the World Cup in England next year, he has to ensure that Kenya will play to the best of their potential.

The team which humiliated the former world champions India at Gwalior on their tour certainly has the guts to do so believes a soft spoken Nairobi based Karim who is also the managing director of the Aristocrats Insurance Brokerage Ltd

Kenya's only other biggest moment came during the last World Cup two years ago when they crushed the West Indies Now with a former West Indian cricketer Alvin Kallicharan to guide their fortunes until the World Cup Karim appears firm that Kenya will provide some shock treatment to the teams in next year's World Cup

The Kenyan team has plans to move on to England well in advance before the World Cup begins. Their strategy to employ Peter Lever foriner English cricketer—to not only strengthen the bowling department but also to get to know more about the English conditions—should help them out in providing some surprise results.

Karım s career has been a colourful one He was born in Kenya to a Tanzanian mother and an Indian father (of Kutch origin in Gujarat) (His forefathers migrated to Africa in the thirties) He was selected for the Kenyan national cricket team in 1980



Karim pictured during a tour of India

Some Kenyan players: (from left) Martin Suji, Maurice Odombe and Steve Tikolo

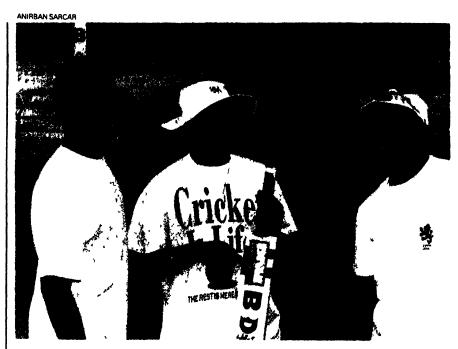
when he was a mere 17 years old and has been playing the game regularly since then, though he used to play a lot of tennis in between.

In fact, Karim was a Davis Cupper with the Kenyan team which lost to Egypt in the second round in 1988. Between 1981 and '85, Karim was in the United States on a tennis scholarship—for two years at the Palmbeach Junior College and later for 2-1/2 years at Harvard University. However, of late, he has reduced his interest drastically in the racquet sport and is concentrating more on cricket.

Ever since Kenya qualified for the 1996 World Cup four years ago, cricket has moved up a few notches in popularity in the African nation where football is still the passion with the masses. Kenya's FIFA ranking stands at 92. Karim feels it is unfortunate that Kenya's football standards are not very high, despite a lot of money and effort being poured into the game by the government and the football federation there.

"Kenya's athletics is well known to the world. Our athletes have proved that they are the world-beaters, but still football rules in our country," says Karim before focussing on cricket in his country. "To reach an Indian or Australian standard in cricket," he continues, "we will take a lot of time. Till recently, we have been playing in the lower rung with the associate members of the International Cricket Council. The standard there is much lower than the full members."

Karim, however, is not the one who expects Kenya to reach heights overnight. He is very much aware that India and Pakistan took years to attain some standard and even the current world champions Sri Lanka for that matter took as long as two decades to make a significant impact on the world scene. "We know, we're going to be defeated and will have to accept humiliations over a period of time against the top cricketing nations. We know we have to build up from there and not lose courage," says



Karim.

"For that to happen, we need more players coming in and playing this sport," Karim explains. "We should have the right infrastructure and, of course, the right system and good coaches too. If a proper system is

"We know, we're going to be defeated and will have to accept humiliations over a period of time against the top cricketing nations. We know we have to build up from there and not lose courage"—Aasif Karim

followed, I think, it takes a minimum of 10 years to achieve towering heights."

Karim informs that the Kenyan association is trying to promote more cricket in schools. "Because that's where you get a lot of talent," he reveals and points out hopefully, "cricketing-wise infrastructure in Kenya is very limited and very few people are involved with the game. We're hoping that this scheme of the Kenyan association will be more popularised in the coming years and

spread to various towns and rural areas. The more the number, the better it would be for Kenyan cricket."

Karim feels that the South African influence on Kenya should be more, if the game has to get a real big boost in his country. "Like Bangladesh," he feels, "is having a sub-continent influence on the game with India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka being next-door countries. We also should have some support from South Africa though it's quite far from us. I understand from the ICC that the way India and Pakistan have supported Bangladesh cricket, South Africa will do the same thing for Kenya in promoting the game."

Kenya lost to Bangladesh in the famous ICC final last year. Earlier, Kenya had a good win against them on their home soil. Bangladesh beat them in Hyderabad in the three-nation tournament in India.

"The fortunes have been quite mixed. But cricketing-wise, they (Bangladesh) have an advantage over us because of the tremendous support they get from the government. Cricket is a national sport and there is a lot of following for the game. Even good infrastructure exists there. At this stage, Bangladesh have a better chance for improvement but we're hoping to emulate them," concludes Karim.

"MY CONSCIENCE IS CLEAR"

WASIM AKRAM refutes charges of being involved with the betting mafia and talks on a host of other cricket-related topics

S a player Wasim Akram is a phenomenon, a legend, not only in Pakistani cricket, but the world over. Something new, something positive and something very destructive is in store once he sets into his bowling stride. Indeed, his credentials as a player have always been above board.

Today, he figures prominently in the accusations of match fixing and most of his moves are alleged to be linked with the betting mafia. When Pakistan lost in Sharjah last year, he was stripped of f the captaincy amidst accusations of match fixing.

"We cricketers are not so mean as to disgrace our country and ourselves for money. It is a group of people who are jealous of us and spread such rumours. I have never involved myself in this illegal practice," he defends himself.

Wasim appeared before a Senate Committee probing the match fixing and betting scam. Although, one of the members of that committee, Senator Iqbal Haider minced no words in saying that the committee had not cleared Akram from the charges, he later joined the team in South Africa.

Wasim was in Pakistan after taking a mini break from his county commitments.

Here are excerpts from the interview:

You have come to Pakistan after four months and in between you played for Pakistan in South Africa and then in Zimbabwe. How come you were dropped and then later sent to join the team? I have always been mentally strong and will remain so. Ups and downs do come in a career.

As a see m we have not performed in



the way we should have. Regardless of who the captain is, whether I lead, or Aamer (Sohail) leads, or Rashid (Latif) is the captain, the team should win. It is success that brings a good name to the team and at the end of the day success is what really matters.

We should think of the team. It should be above everything. We should work together and our countrymen should back us, should support us whether we win or lose. This is very very important.

So you must have been under tremendous pressure?

One is under pressure throughout one's career but this time it was a pressure of a different sort. Things I had not done, things I was not involved in were affecting me. The only answer to this was to silence my critics and accusers through my performances. That I did in South Africa.

From now on, anyone who becomes vicious in the press against me will have to bear the consequences as I have filed a case against a newspaper which has tarnished my reputation.

Before you joined the team, it was 1-0 up. But when you joined, Pakistan lost the third Test. Was it true that due to your presence, the team spirit went haywire? I joined the team and Inzamam attained full fitness. He had been injured when the team won the second Test. He was in form and I was there, the team was definitely more stronger but full praise to the South Africans who skittled us out twice on a good batting wicket.

On the first day we captured six of their wickets for 150 odd runs, but they played well in the second innings. The series was squared and then they thrashed us in the one-day tournament. That's all! They played well in the third Test and there was nothing wrong with the team spirit. It was just that we played badly and they were better than us in that Test match.

Pakistan team coach Haroon Rasheed, while resigning from his post on the team's return, proclaimed that the team spirit was bad and that every player was trying for the captaincy and things like that?

I don't think the situation was like thatit is absolutely wrong. It has become a custom in our society when a person no longer holds a position, he starts berating his colleagues. This happens in our country, it's common and in cricket it happens very often.

This is not correct. There are some players who have not yet retired and still want to play...they are the ones who generate such things. They belittle their own players instead of uplifting their morale.

It was a fact that the other team was better. It bowled well on bouncy tracks, about which our batsmen had no idea. Our bowlers too had no idea how to bowl on a bouncy track, what should be the line and length, etc.

"One is under pressure throughout one's career but this time, it was a pressure of a different sort. Things I had not done, things I was not involved in were affecting me."

We should look at the positive aspects rather than think about the negative points. All the boys were helping each other. The team was willing to win but the other team was better, had done its homework better than us. It's captain and coach were concentrating on cricket unlike our people who were looking at captaincy or irrelevant matters. They were organised and we were not.

Then came the news that you had a scuffle with Aamer Sohail during the South African tour?

Aamer has denied that, and I also

deny it. We are not kids who fight on small things. Arguments take place which are common even in a family. We have discussions, heated discussions, but always positive ones and we enjoy cricket.

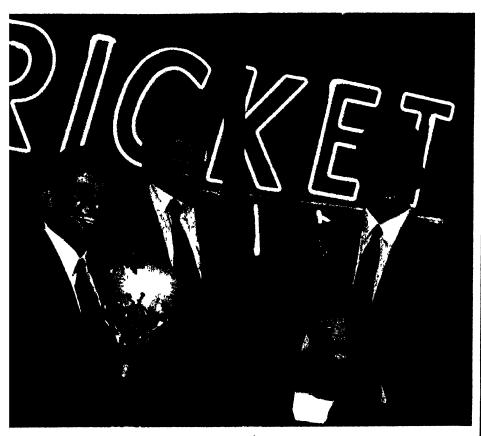
I spoke to Aamer and he told me about that. I would like to make a request to the press. The press can lift us to the top, and it can bring us down to earth. It should think of the country.

It should highlight cricket and comment on that and not cook up fake fights. It should back the team, and comment on the actual game played, and not treat it like a children's team.

Indiscipline has always been the bane of the Pakistan team. Why do we always lack in that area? I accept that... I fully agree. We went to England in 1996 and there were no such problems of discipline. "Koi problem nahin thi" and then we went to Australia and there were no problems. When you have a strict management, then there is no problem, but when the boys know that they can have their way either through the manager or the coach, or the captain, then indiscipline is inevitable.

Whatever rules are for the new boys should also be for the seniors, but suppose if Wasim Akram pretends illness and does not come to practise every day then it is wrong. Every day you can't escape through excuses. The management should deal strictly with the matter. Once they find any player doing such things or indiscipline is seen, then the offender should be handed the ticket back home and told that he is no longer required. We have never sent a player back, because it needs a big heart. We need a manager with that heart.

The Pakistan team lost badly in Sharjah raising suspicions of match fixing and betting and subsequently you were alleged of involvement with the betting mafia. Are these allegations true? These allegations are out of sheer jealousy of some people who can't



Akram pictured with Venkatesh Prasad during the annual Ceat Cricket Ratings Awards ceremony

bear to see the Pakistan team winning consistently. They only notice us once we lose and then they immediately start criticising. I say do criticise but restrict it to our cricket. I have been playing my part in Pakistan's wins and suddenly people raised hell when I scored four runs off 19 balls.

I only came to know that after I read the newspaper that my cautious batting had been misinterpreted. Next time I will go for a run-a-ball even if we are in a winning position, win or lose. Why make four off 19 balls? What will the new players think when every time we lose they learn that the match was alleged to be fixed. I think we have gone ten years backward.

But there is an adage that 'where there is smoke there is fire!'

I have given you my opinion and can't say about others. I have never seen anything like that and can't even pinpoint with players are involved. I can also accuse, but my policy is that

when I don't see anything I don't say anything.

How clear is your conscience?

I have a really clear conscience. I am satisfied and that is why I am moving around.

I have filed a case against a newspaper which had tarnished my reputation and I will claim damages. It printed nothing about cricket, but went after my family background and now I will go till the very end. Enough of silence. I had left it to Allah and kept silent.

Would you appear before the PCB Probe Committee?

Yes I will. I have appeared before the Senate Committee and am ready to appear before any committee. I kept silent but enough is enough. Here if someone hits you with a brick, you have to, at least, reply with a stone.

What is the solution to all this mess?

I think the Board will have to become involved. If the Board stays silent,

then the press will write whatever it wants. People will also say whatever they want and injustice will prevail. No one will dare do all this once the Board knows nothing has happened.

If the Board is firm in its conviction that the players have not done anything wrong and says so, then no one will believe the allegations appearing in the press. The Board will have to back the players. I think the Board enjoys seeing the players getting humiliated by the press and the public.

You groomed Ata-ur-Rehman and gave him enough chances in spite of criticism but now he has come up with an affidavit revealing that you gave him money to bowl badly?

I can't say anything about anyone. There is an unwritten code of ethics in cricket that when you are dropped or you retire, you don't throw mud on any of your colleagues. Whatever there is, will come out in court.

Ata ur Rehman denied it the very next day, said to me that there is no such thing. Now I can say anything and can give an affidavit.

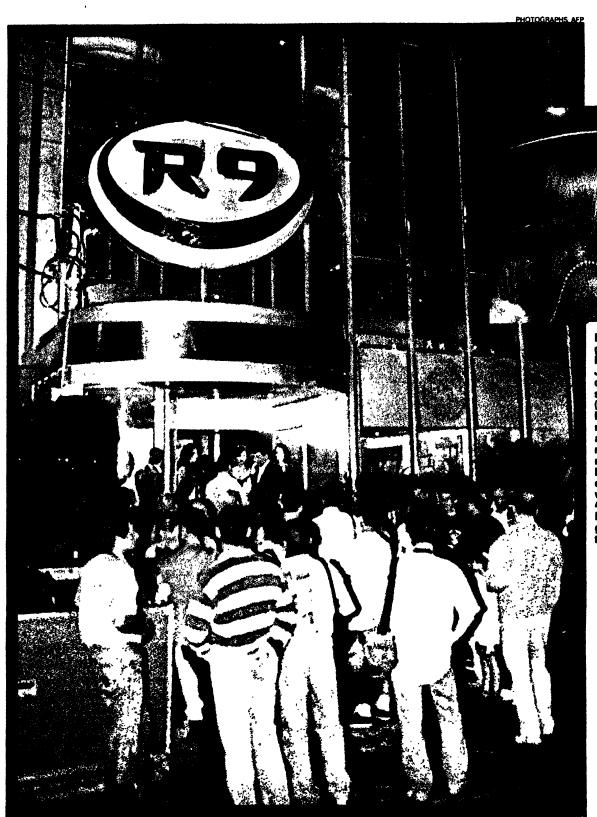
Dr Aamer Aziz has alleged that you faked your injury and you could have played in the quarter-final of the 1996 World Cup at Bangalore?

First of all, tell me who is this Dr Aamer Aziz. He used to beg me for an entry into the dressing room. Now when such people get attention, they tell lies because he wants to come into the limelight.

I remember I was lying in the dressing room in Bangalore and he begged me to be allowed to come inside. I had said that at the moment there was a rush in the dressing room and he should come back later. How can he comment on my muscular injury as he is a surgeon. Dan Kiesel is the right man to say anything on my rib cage injury and he said that I was unfit to play. He was the incharge and not Dr Aamer Aziz.

Interviewed by Shahid A.Hashmi courtesy the cricketer pakistan

INVESTING HIS MONEY



People gather at the grand opening of the R9 Cafe in Rio De Janeiro. The cafe, owned by Brazilian soccer star Ronaldo (hence the name R9, 9 being his jersey number) and other associates, is a mixture of a nightclub, bar-restaurant and entertainment centre with a capacity for 400 people. (Inset): Ronaldo with his girlfriend Susana at the opening



A GAME OF NINEPINS

The constant sacking of national coaches has been detrimental to the cause of hockey in India

NDIAN hockey coaches are being chopped and changed like a game of musical chairs. Coaches hailed as stalwarts and saviours get dropped unceremoniously after one dismal international performance. The latest victim is Vasudev Bhaskaran. Just last year Bhaskaran was hailed as a hero when he guided the Indian junior team to a silver medal performance in the World Junior Championships at Willesden, England

The Indian Hockey Federation (IHF) bigwigs had stated that Bhaskaran's appointment was for a long term, as India had three major assignments this year, the World Cup at Utrecht, the Commonwealth Games at Kuala Lumpur and the Asian Games at Bangkok But after India finished ninth at Utrecht, Bhaskaran has gone with the wind.

A perusal of the track record of the

IHF shows that the curt dismissal of a national hockey coach is not very surprising. In the Nineties, national hockey coaches have tumbled like the proverbial ninepins. In a span of eight years, India has had eight national hockey coaches.

After Ganesh's failure in the 1990 World Cup at Lahore, Jhaman Lal Sharma assisted by Inam-ur-Rehman took over for over a year.

In March 1991, veteran Balkishen Singh was appointed till the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. Following India's shabby debacle at Barcelona, Balkishen was cast aside as bad rubbish.

Then in March 1993, Zafar Iqbal was appointed as the national coach. He continued till the 1994 Hiroshima Asiad. During his tenure, India won silver medals in the 1993 Asia Cup and 1994 Asian Games, both held at Hiroshima. It was a period of re-adjustments in Indian hockey as some stalwarts had retired and players like Pargat Singh, Jagbir Singh and Sukhjeet Singh were unavailable as they were suspended by the IHF. Yet Zafar with his quiet diplomacy developed a balanced team by blending established stars with new players. Yet he was made a scapegoat for not winning the gold medal against South Korea in the 1994 Asiad. Zafar Iqbal was also a victim of the change of guard in the fe deration. With KPS Gill at the helm of affairs at the IHF, many associated with the past regime of R.Prasad were dismissed.

Zafar became a victim of hockey politics musical chairs.

Next in favour was Cedric D'Souza, a scientific coach whose greatest achievement was the resounding 5-1 win over Pakistan in the 1995 SAF Games final at Chennai. Cedric also revamped the team and improved the defence at penalty corners. Cedric's team played scientific hockey but he also fell by the wayside after the 1996 Atlanta Olympics where India went with much hope but finished a dismal eighth. Cedric was a victim of player power. He was not very popular with the senior players like Pargat Singh and was replaced by Vasudev



The present national coach Kaushik feels that A. B. Subbish is the best goalkeeper in India

Bhaskaran for the 1996 Kuber Champions Trophy. This was a surprise announcement, as M.K. Kaushik and Somaiyya were tipped for the job. However, Chennai-based Bhaskaran's appointment then reflected the shifting power politics in the IHF and the rise of secretary K. Jyothikumaran also from the same city.

In 1997, Bhaskaran was busy with the junior national team. So recently retired Pargat Singh, took over as national coach. Then there was a coup within the IHF and Pargat was again reptaced by Bhaskaran in 1998. Now Bhaskaran has been sidetracked and M.K. Kaushik has at last fulfilled his dream of handling the senior men's hockey team. So considering the history of IHF's treatment of national

coaches the change of guard from Bhaskaran to Kaushik is not strange. Even the manner in which Bhaskaran quit was like old wine in new bottles.

There were the inevitable accusations and recriminations. Bhaskaran stated that the senior players, like Dhanraj Pillay, Mukesh Kumar and Sabu Varkey did not play up to their potential. He also felt they were indisciplined and should be sacked. Yet the new man in favour, Maharaj Kumar Kaushik, has contrary views on the selection of the established players.

Kaushik categorically said that, "if the senior players are fit and in form they will get preference in the teams that I am coaching. For the Commonwealth Games, I selected Pillay, Varkey, Riaz, Mukesh and recalled goalkeeper A.B. Subbiah and forwards Baljit Singh Dhillon and wiry Sanjeev Kumar as there was no time to build up a new team. Also, all of them are now fit and in good nick. So why should I not take advantage of their vast experience. We do not have many talented players in India and on current form these senior players are the best in the country. As far as I am concerned, experience, form and fitness counts more than the exuberance of youth."

The affable, soft-spoken but astute Kaushik has about a decade's experience in coaching the national team. He realises the vicissitudes and hazards of this onerous task. Kaushik was for some years assistant to national coach M.P. Ganesh in the late 1980s and in the 1990 World Cup at Lahore. He next took over the senior Indian women's team from 1991 to 1994. He left after India failed to get a medal in the 1994 Hiroshima Asian Games.

A seasoned campaigner, Kaushik knows that it will not help his coaching career if he gets categorised as favouring either senior or junior players. In fact, a strong allegiance towards players from the Junior World Cup was one of the major factors for Bhaskaran's downfall. The wily Kaushik realising this predicament has said that, "I am

KAUSHIK'S VIEWS ON HIS TEAM

BOUT the recall of goalkeeper A.B. Subbiah, Kaushik said, "Subbiah was good, is good and is our best goalkeeper. Jude Menezes is a goalkeeper of potential but needs more experience." Kaushik, however, felt that Jagdish Ponappa, the junior international goalkeeper still has a long way to go.

About defenders: "Dilip Tirkey and Barla are the best pair in the country. Cheops D'Costa is very promising and has a good penalty corner hit. We need to improve in our penalty corner conversion."

About midfielders: "This is the best quartet available. Thirumal is sound in the defence whilst Riaz is good distributor. Baljit Singh Saini is now in good nick and could be our main playmaker."

About the forwards: "Young Gagan Ajit has the instinct of a goal scorer and I hope he displays the temperament in international matches. The recalled forwards Baljit Dhillon and Sanjeev Kumar are in good form and should strengthen the left flank. Mukesh, Pillay and Varkey are still the best in the country and so I have chosen them."

Coach Kaushik: "We do not have many talented players in India and on current form these senior players are the best in the country"

choosing a national squad based on players who are in form and who I feel will fit into my pattern of play and keep the shape of the team in the way I want. I am not agains' inducting new blood in the team and so have chosen Mumbai's defender Cheops D'Costa and Air India's talented centre forwaro Gagan Ajit Singh for the Cor into wealth Games as they fit into into whemes."

Incidentally Cheops' elder brother Cornelius D'Costa had played for India in 1993 but his career was stalled due to a knee injury. Cornelius has also made a comeback to the national team this season. He was chosen in India A's squad for the four-nation Panasonic Cup at Hamburg.

Kaushik is very particular about choosing players noted for their ability to adapt to the pattern of play

and who will not create problems it they are on the bench. The team for the Commonwealth Games was selected after the Murugappa Gold Cup at Chennai. In this tournament, nippy midfielder Sandeep Somesh was the best player of the tournament but was not included as he did not tit into the coach's scheme of things. So far Kaushik like Frank Sinatra is doing it his own way. He has retained

the talented but temperamental Dhanraj Pillay as skipper. The nucleus of the forward line is the same as that of the Utrecht World Cup: Pillay, Mukesh and Sabu Varkey. Kaushik has also insisted that he wanted his own team of coaching assistants. The IHF desperate for success has bowed to his wishes.

Kaushik's assistants are former international goalkeeper Charles Cornelius and Ramesh Parameshwaran. The IHF supremo KPS Gill has made many conciliatory statements and said that the coaching trio of Kaushik, Charles and Ramesh Parameshwaran would remain unchanged till the Bangkok Asiad. Gill also said that Kaushik was fully involved in the selection of the squad.

The IHF must realise that constant changing and chopping of coaches is detrimental to the cause of Indian hockey. Continuity in playing styles is required. Balkishen Singh opted for his version of "total hockey". Later, Zafar Iqbal reverted to the traditional sub-continental style of play, 2-3-5. Cedric D'Souza opted for a more flexible midfield. Bhaskaran also used a defensive centre half and an attacking medio. Players get shuffled and re-shuffled like a pack of cards. For instance, Sanjeev Kumar has been in and out of the national squad for nearly a decade. His stickwork and game sense has always been good but some coaches feel he lacks the mental and physical toughness to succeed in international hockey.

Baljit Singh Dhillon of Punjab
Police was first tried by Zafar Iqbal and
later discarded by Cedric D'Souza for
lack of variety and penetration.
However, the inability to find a
genuine left winger has led to his
recall. Similarly, goalkeeper A.B.
Subbiah was considered over the hill
before the Utrecht World Cup in May
'98 but now Kaushik says he is the
best in the country. What must be
realised is that these judgements are
being made by renowned
ex-internationals like Bhaskaran,
Kaushik and Zafar Iqbal.

Our selection committee in recent times has consisted of greats of the



Dilip Tirkey is considered to be the best defender in the country. He will be ably supported by Barla

past like Zafar Iqbal, Ajitpal Singh, Ashok Kumar and Haripal Kaushik. Yet, why is there so much inconsistency in the selection of players? Wiry left winger Edward Aranha was hailed as a bright prospect by Cedric D'Souza just three years ago. Now he is in the wilderness as is Gavin Fereirra, who was once considered one of the most intelligent players in the country.

Bhaskaran felt that forwards of the future were Samir Dad and Harbhajan Singh. Now Kaushik has discarded both of them, though Samir Dad is reportedly injured. Dashing left winger Brojen Singh, inside forwards Atif Idris and Imran-ul-Haq have played occasionally for India but then been neglected. The really surprising omission is Praveen Kumar who, after the 1993 Bikaner Nationals, was rated as the fastest forward of the country and a find for the future. Yet his international career lasted just two

years and now he is rarely even called for the camps.

More consistency and accountability in selection is required. The IHF should refrain from dropping coaches because of hyped-up expectations and ego problems. National coaches need long-term appointments. Also the national selectors should display a greater foresight in their selection. Remember the case of Sri Lankan batsman Mervin Attapatu. In his first five Test innings, he scored just one run but the selectors realised his potential and persisted with him. Now he is Sri Lanka's most dependable batsman. So if the selectors feel a player has the talent and temperament then he should be persisted with. Or we should opt for the system of the national coach choosing his own squad and he should be accountable for results.

The IHF and Indian hockey needs to pull up its socks or else we will lose the winning habit and get swamped in the quagmire of mediocrity.

TENNIS INDEX

PLAYER who Boris Becker says "is really probably better than anybody who ever played the game": Pete Sampras.

WHAT Chris Evert likes about today's female teen stars besides their competitive skills: "Their brashness."

WHAT Anna
Kournikova says her
favourite
expression is: "Lam
beautiful, famous and
gorgeous."

TUMBER of the top 8 female athletes in annual endorsement earnings who are tennis players: 5 (Monica Seles, Steffi Graf, Martina Hingis, Anna Kournikova and Venus Williams).

WHAT No.2 seed Marcelo Rios called Wimbledon after being upset by Francisco Clavet in the first round: "Just another tournament."

HAT German beauty Anke Huber once found in the wardrobe of her hotel room: A stalker who had been pursuing her.

NUMBER of times the official 1998 French Open web site



(www.frenchopen.org) was visited on June 5th: 18.8 million hits, a daily record for any Grand Slam event web site.

HAT Yevgeny
Kafelnikov did during a
three-minute break for a
hamstring injury at a
Wimbledon tuneup
tournament in Halle,

Germany: He used his mobile phone to call his girlfriend.

WHAT practising his new, more powerful serve for hours each day before the 1976 Wimbledon, which Bjorn Borg won, forced him to do: Take injections to numb the stomach muscle pain when he played.



ambition is: To become "the best farmer in Minsk province."

Navratilova reached in 84 tournaments from 1982 to 1986: 78.

How Pete Sampras

'He's the game's Dennis

Rodman."

TUMBER of different players who have reached the last four Grand Slam men's singles finals: 8.

WHAT Andre Agassi says he's strived his whole life for . Peace of mind,"

YEAR in which Rod Laver, who won the Grand Slam in 1962 and 1969, said, "No one is going to dominate this game any more as some individuals once did. There are too many good players now": 1976.

NUMBER of black entrepreneurs who are tournament directors of the 80 ATP Tour events and the 53 WTA TOUR events: 0.

WHY 18-year-old Venus Williams isn't interested in dating boys: "It's against all my beliefs right now. Plus, I think I'd get tired very easily."

Compiled by Paul Fein

THE person whose advice
Pete Sampras said he
"would love to get in order to
see how he has stayed
motivated through the
years": Michael Jordan.

WHO Arthur Ashe once said was "like Elvis, bigger than the game": Bjorn Borg.

PERSON who phoned all-time great Bobby Riggs the most when he was on his deathbed: Billie Jean King, his conqueror in their famous 1973 "Battle of the Sexes" match.

W HAT Natasha Zvereva, who upset Steffi Graf and Monica Seles at Wimbledon, says her career

TENNIS AS USUAL

Ramesh Krishnan may have quit playing active tennis, but he's still very involved with the game. He is now



T was a terribly hot summer afternoon in Chennai. But the young tennis trainees at the Krishnan Tennis Centre couldn't care less. Lending a helping hand and shouting out instructions was the man behind the academy—India's former No.1 tennis player—Ramesh Krishnan.

He took time off from his busy schedule to air his views on his academy and on tennis in general. Here are excerpts from the interview...

How did you set about building the coaching centre?

At the end of 1993, I stopped playing. It was then that I was thinking of what next to move on to. All along, this had already been at the back of my mind—my landy had been involved with tennis, my grandfather had taught tennis. So this was the logical extension and it so happened that my

family had bought this land more than 30 years ago. We came and inspected it—it turned out to be of just the right dimensions. So it was almost as if it was destined to be. Next we approached the sponsers and the response was very positive. This is how we set about on the mission of teaching tennis. So once I stopped playing, this became possible. I don't think I would have had the energy to do it while I was playing actively.

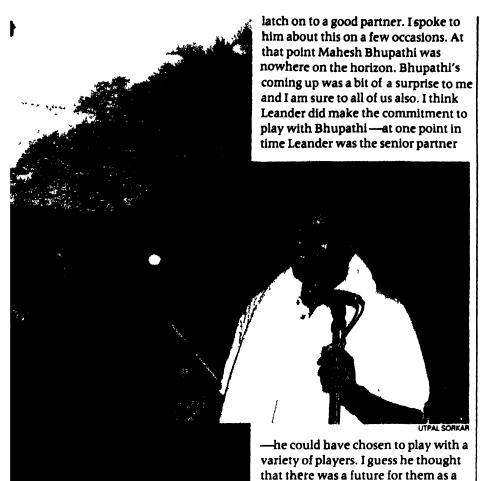
What are the facilities provided by your coaching centre?

The centre has a total of eleven courts of which nine are clay courts and two are synthetic. There is a gymnasium which sports highly technical work-out stations. We have programmed around 16 to 20 exercises. Every child has an individual schedule which is decided according to their fitness levels.

Generally, we find one or two players from India good enough for world competitions. But the overall standard seems to be quite low—now that you coach youngsters, how do you think we can get a few world class players at the same time?

To start with, I think we are not a country of sportspeople. Whatever initiative we've had has been from individual efforts, or through families. Ultimately sports is played by a very limited pool of people --- so we are not looking at a wide enough section of the population. My grandfather was interested in tennis so he was able to transfer it to my father. In the case of Vijay Amritraj, I think it was his mother who was keen on the game. I developed a passion for tennis because of my father and grandfather. Even for Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi, their families were keen on

NTERVIEW



sports. Therefore, already there are so few sportspeople and from that you're looking for their children to come through. So it's a very, very small pool you're looking at. I think the biggest problem is that somebody born in a non-sporting family doesn't have access to whatever it takes to succeed in sports. Whereas, in the West, the technical knowhow, the infrastructure, anything is available to everybody. But in our country we are not being able to give it to somebody from a non-sporting family.

What do you think about the excellent partnership between Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi?

Even when I started playing with Leander, I always felt he could do well in doubles. He had already had a lot of success in singles in the Davis Cup—the question was whether he could

team and that seems to have paid off wonderfully.

In the current international

In the current international circuit —who do you think is simply the best?

Pete Sampras is still the top player—even though he had a bad start in the year if you go by his standards. He seemed to be slipping a bit. The fact that he lost the French Open must have been a blow to him. Wimbledon was an indicator of his form at present. The next person that I would mention is Marcelo Rios. He seems to have what it takes to win Grand Slam tournaments.

Back to Indian tennis —What do you think about the AITF's planning of the tennis calendar?

There is a real dearth of tournaments. See, for somebody like Leander who doesn't have to interact with the Federation, he just comes to play Davis Cup, it's all right for him. But for somebody who has to play locally,

there is a dearth of tournaments and this becomes a problem for him.

Now about yourself—were you determined from your childhood that you wanted to be a tennis player?

Oh yes. My father was a big influence on me making the decision. I did play other sports in school, I still follow them, but tennis has always been special to me. Now also, even though I don't play that often, everytime I go out to the tennis court, the feeling doesn't change.

Even after you stopped playing actively, it must have been a wonderful experience winning the over-35 doubles title at Wimbledon in 1997.

Surely. Though I would have preferred the singles title, because that is the most coveted one. But once you go out to play, you definitely like to win, and playing at Wimbledon is the ultimate high for a tenns player.

Do you remember the best match that you have played in your illustrious career?

Most of the memories are from the Davis Cup. In 1993, we had some good wins. We beat Switzerland in Calcutta, and France in Frejus In 1987, we made it to the finals. At the end of my career, these are memories that really stand out. I cannot think of a single match that was the best for me.

Whom did you consider to be the most difficult opponent during your time?

Ivan Lendl. It's true that he never won a title at Wimbledon—one of those things that can happen to a player. But he won all the other titles, and for me personally he was the most difficult person to beat.

What are your plans for the future?

The future is what we are involved with now—the coaching camp. It's been 2-2 1/2 years—and this is where my entire energy goes in.

Interviewed by Ananya Das Gupta

WAKING DREAM

A first-time visitor gives her impressions of Wimbledon

HE strawberries and cream had always seemed tempting. And so my dream song ran, 'I'll be there someday'. Never imagining that 'Someday' would arrive so soon. In jest, I had told my supervisor at Cambridge that one of the reasons for which I'd wanted to study there was its proximity to the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club. I'd also told my friends, tongue in cheek, before leaving Calcutta last year to watch out for me in the Players' Box this year The joke was old. The feeling, however on 22nd June, was like nothing I'd ever known before

If I seem a bit melodramatic talking about tennis, perhaps those lunatic soccer fans from England (some of whom, I regret to say, are my friends) would understand.

I had never slept on a pavement before And two sleeping bags between the four of us didn't make things very comfortable. But the burger and ice cream vans were soon in place and music was blaring from the neighbouring tent. Having been reassured of shelter in it, in case of rain, we settled down for a night under the stars of a Wimbledon sky.

Awakened by a curious photographer who wanted to see if three people could really share one sleeping bag, the first sight which I had was that of two tall walking bananas, distributing scones and Tim Henmagic stillers. My day had begun!





If I'd ever thought British sports fans were obnoxious, I quickly changed my mind. The inhabitants of all the brightly coloured tents ahead of us in the queue wanted to watch Henman on Court One. So they were given fluorescent pink wristbands to wear to the ticket counter. I got a dark green one which said only two words: Centre Court.

Have you ever walked around in a daze, crowds of strangers thronging around, aimless, misty eyed, but wanting the day to go on and on? The truth is I'd lost my companions within moments of entering the gates. So I was left alone for the first couple of hours. My first stop was the Aurangi Park practice courts, where I saw Chanda Rubin, Thomas Enqvist, the Woodies, and—among wolf whistles—a long-limbed Mary Pierce. I pressed my nose to the net, peering at those familiar figures as they monotonously hit ball after ball.

I could have hung around all day, only there were some other things to do. Like checking out the statue of Fred Perry. And a visit to the famous museum, which displayed, among other things, Ted Tinling's beautiful tennis dresses and players' memorabilia.

It was soon time to head for the outside courts (A Centre Court ticket gave me access to all of them as well as standing room on Court Two) where play started at noon. Watching good tennis wasn't really my intention. I was too busy clicking away at Amanda Coetzer, Natasha Zvereva and Richey Reneberg, who were trying to get through the first round. The superstars were missing, but not for long.

Meanwhile, everywhere I went, I experienced an intense feeling of deja vu. I had heard Brian Langley and Vijay Amritraj talk about it, and I'd seen it hundreds of times on Star Sports. And also in my dreams.

I managed to find my friend at 2.00 p.m. In the front row of Centre Court. I had never watched a tennis match except on T.V. This was a fitting courtside debut. Pete Sampras to be followed by Steffi Graf. Two living

legends. What more could I ask for? No rain? Yes, it must have been a dream all right because for once, not an umbrella was in sight.

The grass looked lush and green. I looked up in awe at the Royal Box. And when Sampras sat down at the change of ends, he unabashedly looked straight ahead, across the court. And guess who was sitting there? O.K., so maybe he was concentrating hard on the next game, but this is my dream, you know. The match didn't last long, but contrary to popular belief, I didn't find it boring. Unless brilliance is boring.

Did I see Steffi win her last match at Wimbledon? Time will tell, but I felt more than a bit lucky to be able to catch a glimpse of that famous forehand. Mark Philippoussis was next, and he beat the seeded Kafelnikov in an awesome display of serving. His looks were smouldering too, and after the match, I regressed a few years to stand at the Competitors' Entrance, waiting for his exit.

We got an eyeful of Serena Williams' white beads, and Murphy Jenson's shiny bald pate, before the Scud came out, only to be greeted by a horde of screaming females. I who had never deigned to support England at a football match, found myself chanting, "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, oye, oye, oye"!

My last stop was the souvenir shop, where, sad to say, I saw the terrible commercialisation of yet another institution, where everything from tie-pins to towels are sold with the Wimbledon logo on them. A few last pictures against the maroon and green backdrop, and it was time to make my starry-eyed way home. While The Championships 1998 had just begun, a day in the life of my dream was over.

My perennial fave, Richard Krajicek, wasn't due to play until the next day. Neither were the Indian lads, Bhupathi and Paes, whom I would have loved to cheer for. But no, I am NOT complaining. And in case you're wondering, yes, the strawberries and cream do taste a lot sweeter there than anywhere else.

Oindrila Mukherjee

QUESTIONS:

Who was the first wicketkeeper to reach the milestone of 200 dismissals in one-day internationals?

Who was the oldest man to win an Olympic gold?

Who was the first American woman to win an Olympic gold medal?

Who were the famous sister-in-law combination which stole



Answer to Question No.11 the limelight in the 1988 Seoul Olympics?

What was Kerri Strug's achievement at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics?

Who is the only woman basketball player to participate in four consecutive Olympics?

What is the unique that Judith Polgar has achieved in chess?



ANSWERS

1. Jeffrey Dujon (West Indies) with 204 dismissals (183 ct, 21st) in 169 matches.

2. Oscal Swahn of Sweden, at the age of 64 years 258 days, won the shooting gold in 1912 at Stockholm.

3. Margaret Abbott (golfer).

4. Florence Griffith Joyner (3 gold medals) and Jackie Joyner Kersee (one gold in the heptathlon).

5. She helped the American team secure their first-ever Olympic team gymnastics gold medal in spite of suffering from a badly sprained ankle.

6. Teresa Edwards(USA).

7. She is the only woman to be ranked tenth in the men's January 1996 Elo rating list.

8. The match between Anatoly Karpov and Garry Kasparov (it lasted 159 days from 10th September 1994 to 15th Feb.1995).

9. Hasley Crawford (Trinidad & Tobago).

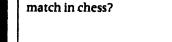
10. Alian Donald (South Africa).

11. Said Aouita (3:29.67 mins).

12. Tatyana Kazankina.

13. Joshua Thugwana

14. Martina Hingis.



Which athlete has an aircraft named after him?

Which is the longest World Championship

Which cricketer is nicknamed 'White Lightning'?

Who is the first man to run the 1500m in less than 3.30 minutes?

12. Who is the first woman to have won both the 800m and

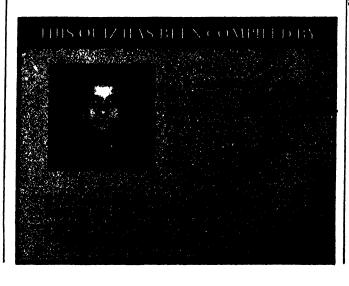


Answer to Question No.14

1500m events at the Olympics?

13. Who was the first South African black to win an Olympic marathon gold?

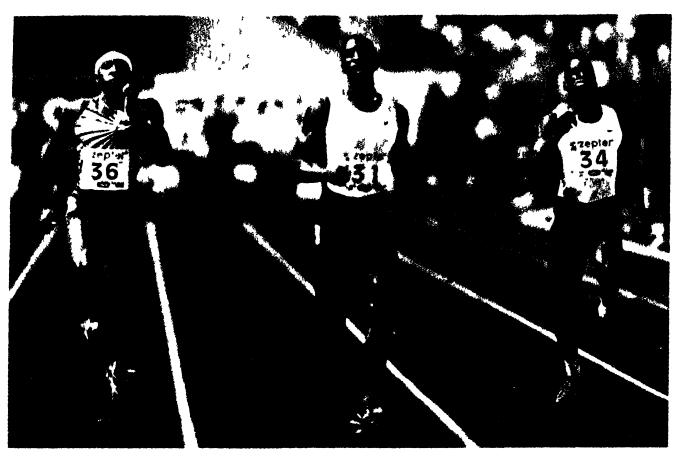
14. Who is the youngest woman tennis player to earn \$1 million dollars in prize money?





WINDOW WORLD

Interesting happenings in the international sports arena

















HERE are two words which come to mind when I recall my three official visits to Pakistan as a sports journalist: hospitality and hostility.

Being witness to an India-Pakistan sporting clash anywhere in the world is bad enough. But when you are in Pakistan, then you get the proverbial "other side of the picture."

My first trip across the border was in 1985 for the Karachi Champions Trophy hockey tournament. It was at the height of the Khalistan movement and it seemed my sardarji mate and colleague was the only Indian in town who was shown any respect.

When he walked down the streets. people would lean out of their cars and shout, "Paaji, Khalistan zindabad."

So it came as no shock that the Indian hockey team were under the tightest of security, forced to become prisoners in their hotel rooms.

Photographer Nikhil Bhattacharya and myself were followed around town by two sherwani clad gentlemen; when we entertained Pakistani journalists in our room, hotel staff slyly inspected our room under the pretext of room cleaning...at midnight! Many Indian pressmen had to report to the police



station before the start of each day's play to clear immigration procedures...everyday!

When India met Pakistan in the tournament, the press box was overrun by frenzied patriots who sat, stood and virtually captured the media area forcing us scared Indian writers to watch the game in the safer confines of the press centre below...on television.

When we returned for the 1990 Hockey World Cup in Lahore, the Indian hockey team's bus was stoned. Pargat Singh and his men had to leave the stadium in the midst of one match because the crowd had gone crazy and even burnt the official Indian flag flying atop the grandstand.

Do you know how it feels to see your national flag being burnt in front of your eyes and there is nothing you can do or say about it.

It was one of the low points of my 13-year-career as a sports journalist, although, in stark contrast, the hospitality was one of the best I have ever received on any overseas tour.

The last trip, for the 1996 World

CARTOON ARTHUR CARDOZC

Cup of cricket, proved to me beyond doubt that despite the incredible hospitality and the surface level courtesy, deep down the wounds of Partition will take a long time to heal on that side of the border.

Or maybe cricket brings out a stronger reaction among people than any other issue. When India clashed with Pakistan in the Bangalore quarterfinal, I watched the game in the elaborate confines of a Lahore family home sipping Black Label scotch.

In return, being the only Indian in the room. I had to bear the brunt of a very hostile verbal attack, the level of which increased proportionately to the alcohol intake.

The volatile atmosphere was capped by the next door neighbour firing a volley from a Kalishnikov from his terrace every time Pakistan got a wicket or hit a boundary.

And you thought war reporters were the only breed to have the privilege of witnessing an AK-47 being fired?

Later that week, when eventual champions Sri Lanka knocked India out at Eden Gardens, there were wild celebrations in the streets of Lahore. Drum-beating crowds, slogan chanting rallies marched down the street celebrating India's loss. It was as if Pakistan had just repeated their triumph in Australia four years earlier.

One sight which will remain etched forever in my memory will be of the young lad, not even in his teens, leading a group in a dance, while shouting at top decibel: "Indian Kutta har giya."

Was this to do with a cricket match or a far deeper entrenched rivalry?

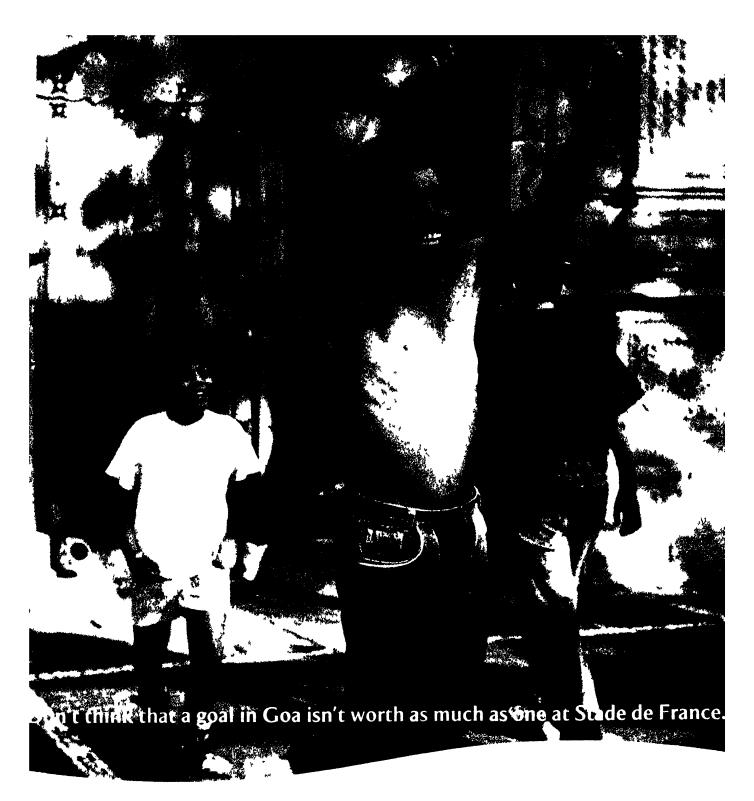
Here in Australia when sports fans talk of the rivalry between the Aussies and the Kiwis, I relate some of the above incidents.

More often that not the next question that I'm asked is, "So do you think India and Pakistan will start a nuclear war?"

"No," I reply, "It's far more serious than that. It's an India-Pakistan sporting encounter!"

Andy O'Brien, Australia





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TROUBLED TIMES

Can Pakistan's battered international image, due to bribery and match-fixing allegations, be salvaged?

Plus: An exclusive interview with IMRAN KHAN: Some People Have Become
Too Greedy'

denies the charges and explains why he has made a comeback



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RAJESH KUMAR

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CAUTION: TROUBLE AHEAD

Pakistani cricket is going through a very bad phase, the Sahara Cup victory, notwithstanding

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SHEER PLUCK

Naresh Kumar Sharma is the best disabled shooter in the country at present. He won the Arjuna Award recently

11/2

DESERVING CHAMPS

Mohun Bagan wins the KBL Federation Cup in style





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FOCUS: INDIA'S PERFORMANCE AT THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Editor: Mansur Alı Khan Pataudı

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF WASIM AKRAM BY MOINUDDIN HAMEED

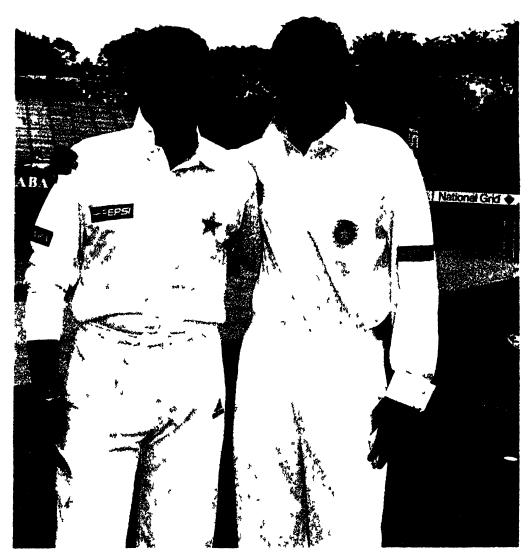


A ONE-SIDED

Pakistan demolished India 4-1, to exact sweet revenge in the Sahara Cup

MAULING





(Clockwise from top extreme left) Inzemem-ul-Haq with the men-of-the-series trophy. His 246 in five outings in Cenada played a major role in Pakistan's fortunes

Asmir Schail with Mohammad Azharuddin. Though Azhar won the toss on all five occasions, it was Sohail who took home the Sahara Cup

Master blester Shahid Afridi scored 142 in five Innings. He also played a valuable role in Pakistan's 4-1 series victory

Sund Gavaskar is always in demand. Here he signs an autograph for Miss India Canada at a party

The jubilant Pakistani team after repaying India back in the same coin. India had defeated Pakistan by exactly the same margin last year

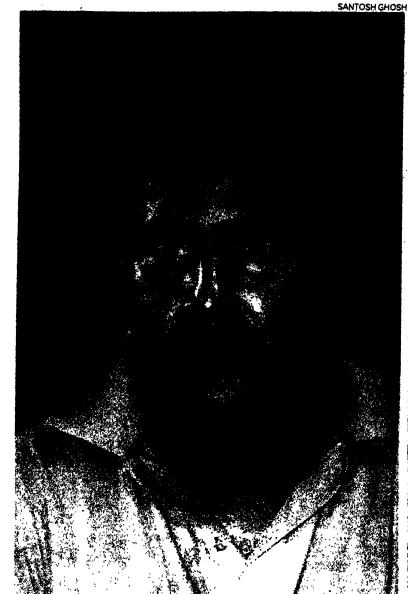














CAUTION: DANGER AHE

Pakistani cricket seems to be going through a very bad phase, the Sahara Cup vict

BY INDRANIL MAJUMDAR

IN or lose, Pakistan cricket always seem to grab the headlines. Never shorn of controversies, the betting and match-fixing allegations are the latest in this never-ending soap opera.

There have been accusations and counter-accusations aplenty as has been the setting up of probe

committees. While the reputation of their cricketers have been at stake, the rumour market has also been busy. Ever since Tim May and Co, had accused Salim Malik of bribery, a lot of dirty linen has been washed in public.



AD

ry notwithstanding

Pormer coach Haroon Rashid's recent deposition before the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) inquiry committee has added spice to the issue. "During my tenure as coach (July '97-August '98) there were

The tainted trie. (From extreme left) Salim Malik, Wasim Akram and Ijaz Akmed will have a lot of explaining to do. They are three of the most talented Pakistani cricketers at present, and the PCB should clear up the case once and for all. However, chances are that they might be exonerated for lack of evidence

some matches which I felt Pakistan should have won, but lost instead."

Rashid Latifhas cited two instances—during an Asia Cup tie in Colombo in '97 and again at a Sahara Cup fixture the same year—when Malik let the team down "conspicuously".

The paying public has often felt cheated and have started to believe that there is certainly fire behind the smoke. Differences between PCB chairman Khalid Mahmood and chief executive Majid Khan also did the cause no good.

The dispute over the team selection for the Sahara Cup added another chapter to their growing dislike for each other. To make matters worse, the Indians began on a winning note in Toronto.

Amid the turmoil, Wasim Akram, one of the prime accused in the scandal, had decided to quit international cricket till his name was cleared and hired a retired judge to fight the allegations. Later, he not only withdrew his resignation, he even played in the home tour against Australia. However, Pakistan cricket seemed to be in a mess.

Four on-the-trot wins have helped Pakistan salvage some pride and helped regain the Sahara Cup. There certainly seems to be a glimmer of hope following the troubled times. Cricket has a marvellous way of emerging stronger from every crisis.

The appointment of Javed Miandad as coach, the return of Aamer Sohail as captain and the recall of Malik and Ijaz Ahmed, the other two players against whom the match-fixing needle of suspicion points, has certainly helped a lot in restoring the balance in their ranks. Though the duo's inclusion had raised a hue and

cry within the PCB, it has been proved beyond doubt that their presence will have a significant bearing on their 1999 World Cup hopes.

The PCB chairman has aiready requested them to be 'patient' and no follow in Akram's footsteps in seeking legal advice. Promising to expedite the probe, he has also stressed that the country does not want to lose a brilliant cricketer in Akram.

Mahmood has conceded that the team morale had suffered considerably.

Not just the team, but the entire infrastructure in Pakistan cricket is being looked upon critically. What began with umpiring in the old days and ball tampering not too long ago has given way to this new saga.

Going by the probe, it seems that the committee is treating Ata-ur Rehman's affidavit, handed over in '97, as the main evidence. The affidavit specifically mentions Akram's allegedly dubious role during the '93-94 one-day series in New Zealand. Malik was the captain on that tour.

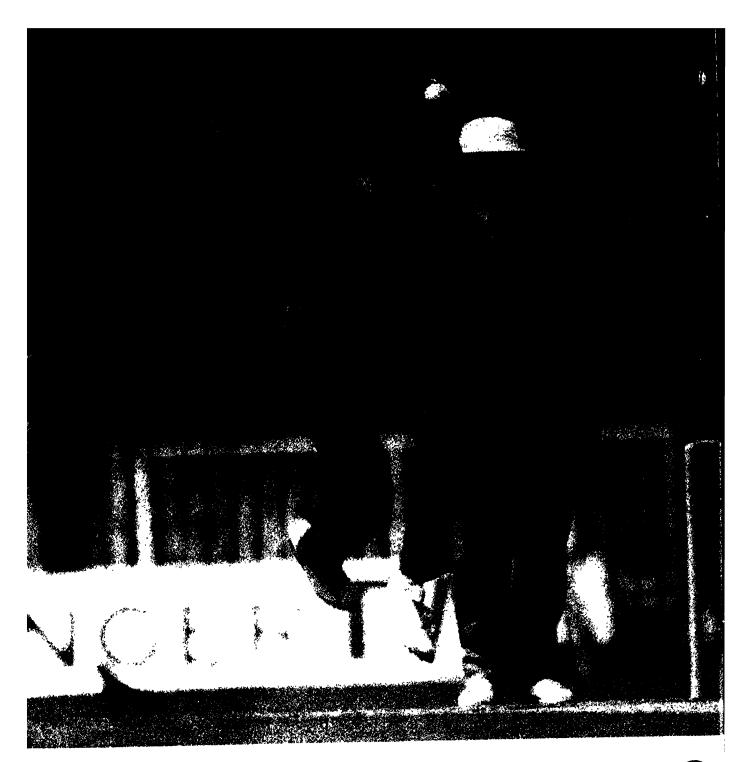
Rehman is reported to have admitted in the affidavit of having let down Pakistan at Akram's behest. But strangely, Rehman is going scot-free and no fingers are being pointed at him for letting the country down.

"It's a management problem. As I see it, every controversy comes out of the dressing room. So the players are to be blamed too...Top of my list is players going public with their differences. Doesn't make for a healthy scenario, does it?" asks former skipper Rameez Raja.

One possible scenario in l'affaire Akram-Malik-Ijaz is that they may be exonerated later for lack of substantial evidence. But will that clear all the suspicion?

"The Board and even the government needs to adopt a straight approach. I strongly feel this global embarrassment of our cricket must stop. If that's not done, negative stories will continue to come out of the dressing room, from other quarters as well," Raja feels strongly.

Perhaps that is the need of the hour for the survival of Pakistan cricket.



"THEY ARE OUT TO

WASIM AKRAM speaks out about the recent confusion regarding his resignation and availability, and of course on the charges of betting and match-fixing

ASIM AKRAM spoke the phone on two different days of the same week, from Nottinghamshire and Manchester. His wife Huma spoke after he made himself available for the series against Australia.

There is a bit of confusion as to what your present status is? a)

you had told me that the '99 World Cup was tops on your agenda. Supposing you can't clear your name before the World Cup, what will you do?

The World Cup is no longer my top priority. I've played enough World Cups. World Cups come and go but a bad name stays with you.

I won't let that happen. I have a one-year-old son. He shouldn't live the rest of his life believing that his



through all the crises of his career

Are you a former cricketer, b) still a current player, c) former turned current, in the sense that you have readily taken back your retirement?

Contrary to what you think, I have not retired. I think, the news agency chap in London who interviewed me didn't quite understand what I was

PHOTOGRAPHS KAMAL JULKA

trying to tell him.

I told him exactly what I had mentioned to you a day earlier, that cricket is no longer the top priority in my life. First I would like to

clear my name from all these allegations. Then only I'll think of playing cricket. In any case I am not getting any younger.

If I recall correctly, a year back

father was a much - hated man.

How do you propose to clear your name?

I shall fight. I've already filed a criminal case against a journalist at the Karachi High Court. If necessary I shall file more such cases against people who are trying to destroy and defame me.

But why would they do it? What is their motive?

It is a big conspiracy. They are out to get me

What do you mean by 'they'?

The officials. They are masterminding all these.

But why would they do it?

Because I don't go and meet them with folded hands, I don't say 'yes sir'

"There Can Be No Smoke Without Fire"

Says a very disappointed IMRAN KHAN regarding the bribery scandal bedevilling Pakistan cricket

Pakistan cricket seems to be in a total mess.

Notwithstanding the Sahara Cup win, Pakistani cricketers are grabbing negative headlines around the world.

Under your leadership, the team had reached a new high. How does it feel, to see all your good work going down the drain?

It's sad. Very sad. I still think they are the most talented team in the world.

How do you explain the negative profile then?

Poor management, frequent changes of leadership. All this and those match-fixing allegations. They seem to have destroyed our cricket. The allegations are the worst part of it

I'll ask you a straight question. Are people actually involved?

It saddens me to say this but there can be no smoke without a fire.

But to what extent?

To what extent I wouldn't know. I'm as confused as an average cricket watcher.

But more than confusion, there's a feeling of disappointment.



Why disappointment? Is this because some of the alleged culprits have served you with distinction?

No. not that. None of them dared

to do such things under me. I can tell you with utmost conviction that no such thing happened during my time.

I'm disappointed because I still can't come to terms with the fact that a cricketer can sell his country.

And again I don't endorse this belief that only two to three players are involved. Either the whole team was involved or at least 7/8 players. Otherwise you can't force the result of a match.

What we get to hear is that some Pakistani players willy-nilly have got into the clutches of the mafia. They tried very hard but they couldn't come out of it...

What nonsense. How can you blame the mafia for this when the plain and simple fact is that some people have become too greedy.

Answer this. How come the mafia never showed up when I was the captain? Tell me, where was the mafia then?

I get your point. But then how do you eradicate this?

By holding a proper and detailed investigation.

That is exactly what is being done now. Isn't it?

and all that.

That doesn't sound too convincing. Imran Khan treated them with much more disdain. Why didn't they conspire against him?

Skipper (Imran) .well, his case was

different. I think, by and large, I have followed his principles. I have always been a self-respecting individual who wouldn't bow down to the wishes of the officials.

Okay, then how would you

account for the fact that not only the officials but some players have also testified against you? According to reports Ata-ur Rahman has submitted a written affidavit with the Board which says you had asked him to bowl

The whole exercise should've begun three years earlier. It would've saved Pakistan cricket from a lot of embarrassment. Instead, the whole thing was pushed under the carpet.

It's because of all this that I prefer to stay away. I find it too depressing.

If called, will you be appearing before the commission? Or will you boycott it because you're in the opposition?

Why should they call me? I have no inner details. They are only calling people who were either part of the team or connected in a certain capacity. All that was after my time.

How do you view Wasim Akram's decision of exonerating himself first and only then will he think of playing cricket?

It's an absolutely right decision. I had advised Wasim to do the same two years ago when the first set of allegations had surfaced against him. I don't know why he has waited for such a long time.

What would you have done if someone made such an allegation against you?

I would have taken him to court. I wouldn't have rested till my name was cleared.

Okay, but what happens if the players are found guilty? Ban them for life!

Interviewed by Gautam Bhattacharya

badly in exchange of a few lakhs. Aaqib Javed has lodged a similar complaint that you instructed him to concede as many runs as possible...

There is a group within the players which is jealous and acting against me.

Which group are you talking about?

I am not going to divulge their names now. But definitely at some stage, I will.

But the accusations of Ata-ur and Aaqib are quite specific. Why aren't you refuting them?

Look here, it's so silly that I saw no point in refuting—such baseless things. What they are saying is quite outrageous. Aaqib says, since he didn't listen to my instructions, I got him dropped from the side.

Tell me, who will buy this story? He has been such an indifferent performer for the last four years that under no Pakistan captain, could he find a permanent place. Hypothetically, let's assume I dropped him for not obeying my 'evil intentions'. Now the simple question is, why didn't he find a place when I

As for Ata-ur's allegation, he is not even an established member of the side. Do you think the captain of Pakistan would go down to a newcomer and request him to bowl badly? Surely, any sane person would've routed the request through a third party.

was not the captain? I feel, he is

talking out of frustration.

But how would leaving cricket be the solution? It would give further credence to the rumours?

You must understand I am in no frame of mind to play cricket. International cricket demands singlemindedness of the highest order. I don't think I have it in me now. It is impossible to concentrate and motivate yourself amidst such nasty rumours.

But with Lancashire you've been in tremendous form.

Yes, I did fairly well for them. We won the championships this year. I could freely play my cricket here, without any disturbance. For the last six months that I'm here no one disturbed me. All of a sudden you get to hear disturbing news.

That the Commission has got

conclusive evidence against you three. (Ijaz, Malik and you)

Yes, it's so depressing. You don't play cricket and earn laurels for the country to get subjected to such a major punishment. You know, your heart breaks. The focus disappears.

Then how are you continuing with Lancashire? You still have some more matches to go.

Its difficult, I know. But I'll manage, somehow. You know. I can't even sleep properly these days.

Have you ever seen a fixed match where, maybe a country other than Pakistan was involved?

No, never. I don't believe you can fix matches.

You don't play cricket and earn laurels for the country to get subjected to such a major punishment. You know, your heart breaks.
The focus disappears

During the first part of the interview, you pointed out that you are not in the right frame of mind to play cricket and subsequently made yourself available for the Australian series. What led to this sudden change of decision?

(Huma Akram, Wasim's wife and motivator, spoke on his behalf.)

Wasim got a call from the Board. Then one of the selectors had also called him. Despite winning the Sahara Cup without him, they still made it clear how important he was to the team. That is why he decided to reverse his decision.

Will he play in the mini World Cup?

You know how the situation in Pakistan cricket is. Things are changing every minute. You can't talk about the mini World Cup now. Wasim is taking one step at a time. So at the moment it's only the first Test against Australia.

HANDSOME HUNK

PATRICK RAFTERmade his female fans go crazy when he won back-toback U.S.Open titles

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This year, Rafter felt very lucky throughout the tournament and very lucky to be in New York 'I felt as the matches progressed that I belonged here' he observed Only seven players have repeated back-to-back wins in the Open era, like Sampras, Connors, McEnroe etc Rafter is now amongst this elite group

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mining town in Queensland, and now living in a poolside pad in Pembroke, Bermuda-partly for travel purposes—is like Newcombe, both a men's and ladies' man. A naturally built athlete with lady-killer looks, Rafter was considered one of PEOPLE magazine's Sexiest Men Alive last year.

"Our sex God Pat" declared a banner when he once confronted Todd Martin at Flinders Park's retractable-roof stadium. "Patrick Rafter, we'll see you after," chanted his boisterous female fans. "Pat's the sexiest Aussie since Dundee outsmiled his first crocodile," said a San Francisco admirer. His female fans even whistle when he changes his shirt mid-match.

It's mundane to say that hordes of teenage girls mob a celebrity and send him bags of fan mail. Rafter is no exception to it. But the truth is Rafter didn't go out with girls until he was 20. In fact, as he confessed once, he was afraid of girls in high school. But the latest news is that he is happily dating the 27-year-old Australian model Lara Feltham.

Rafter has a very good sense of camaraderie with other players and game-wise is very fair and sporting. He travels alone sans a coach and likes to move around in a moped despite being a millionaire. Known among the other players as one of those always ready for a pre-match card game or a post-match beer, his philosophy in life is to help the poor and the needy.

Rafter has gone on record by saying, "Money is nice, but I came into tennis thinking that if I can buy a two-bedroom home, I'm ahead of 90 per cent of the people in this world." And he once returned a five-figure appearance fee and donated nearly a third of his \$650,000 US Open purse to a children's hospital in Brisbane. This year too, Rafter came out with a similar gesture. He handed over a cheque for \$180,000 out of his U.S.Open winnings to a Brisbane hospital to help sick children.

Rafter, it is clear has not only the good looks, but a good heart also.

Aishwarya Lakshmi



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And Rafter is sharing his success with his family. With five brothers and three sisters, he belongs to one large family. Brother Stephen is his agent, sister Louise is in-charge of surgery to repair torn cartilage. But slowly, things turned around. He won his first singles title since last year's US Open when he defeated Mikael Tillstrom in the final of the Gold Flake Open in Chennai.

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UNRAVELLING THE MASK

IVAN LENDL speaks about tennis then and now. and as to how he spends his time these days

VAN LENDL won eight Grand Slam tournaments and a total of 94 titles during his illustrious career. He is considered by many tennis pundits to be the fittest player to play the game. Called the Ostrava Ghost in the tennis circuit when he played, Lendl with his serious demeanour and no-nonsense attitude was considered an enigma by many. He reached the final of the U.S. Open on eight consecutive occasions and was the first male player to surpass \$20 million in career prize money. Lendl holds the Grand Prix record for tournaments won in a year, with 15 in 1982. He is the only player in the Open Era to win three tournaments in successive weeks on three different surfaces. Excerpts from an interview...

You won the U.S. Open three times. What is your fondest memory of that tournament? Winning for the first time is always more special than the others. Every time you win it's great, but the first was definitely the best.

You reached the final of the U.S. Open in eight straight years. How did you manage such consistency year after year?

I was living in Connecticut at the time and would only come over for matches. It was much nicer and relaxing. Everyone complained about the U.S Open; it was too hectic, too this and too that. I was home in Greenwich and I think, for me, that was a big advantage.

In 1984 in the French Open final you were down two sets to

McEnroe. Do you remember what was going through your mind before entering the third set? Of course. I just wanted to last more than two hours. We played the first two sets in one hour. I just told myself, 'Play one point at a time' and it turned into a great match.

You won eight Grand Slam tournaments and 94 titles overall. Does one moment stand out as the highlight of your career?

The first major that I won was probably the highlight. The first major in each of the Slams that I won would also be. The French Open match you mentioned against McEnroe was definitely an interesting match and a very exciting one, and I think it helped me to win other majors.

What were the low points?

It's always a low point when you play well and don't win. Everytime I lost a match, that was a low point. Losing a Grand Slam was more disappointing, but whenever you lose, it's a disappointment.

Does it still bother you that you never won a Wimbledon title?

You may not believe it when I say that it doesn't bother me at all. Knowing my record at Wimbledon and what it took for me to get that kind of record makes me more proud than the rest of

What are your thoughts on the state of men's tennis today?

The men's game has always taken criticism. They attacked Laver and said that he was boring, the same as they do today with Pete Sampras. It



Ivan Lendi's won everything there is to be won except the Wimbledon title, but surprisingly he's got no qualms about it

always happened. Generations before they always said it. I think Pete Sampras is a great role model. They

said the same thing about me. There was much more show when we were younger. I do see a problem for the game right now. It's too fast. Some say it's the racket. The balls and courts, they're too fast and they speed up If they can somehow control the speed of the match, I think they would get a

tour?

I think that most of the popularity of course comes from the personalities of Hingis and Venus and the intrigue of Monica and Steffi coming back.
Women's tennis is very watchable.
Spectators can relate to the game.
Watching Philippoussis and



good handle on it. Some will be happy and some will not be. Who is to decide? It's not a big question. I think some slowing down would be better.

What are your thoughts on the popularity of women's tennis and the dominating players on the

Ivanisevic play, how can you relate to it? How long can you watch two guys serve like that?

Your daughter is currently playing in a golf tournament. What is it like to watch her play? She also played in a tennis

tournament. I get frustrated when they miss because I know they weren't paying attention But that's all part of the learning process

Would you like to see any of your children pursue a career in professional sports and what advice would you give them?

If that is what they want then I would teach them to work hard and have fun.

Currently you've turned your focus to golf, do you have any aspirations to make the pro tour? I want to play as well as I can I enjoy the game, but to say that I would like to be on the PGA Tour would be obnoxious. These guys are great players and just because I played another sport I would never say that I could play on the tour. That wouldn't be right. I love the game and I enjoy my time playing.

What's a typical day for you like these days?

First, I decide and see if I have any business to do, which I then complete.

I see what the schedule is for the kids and I try to plan my time around them. If they go to school from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p m., then I'll do all the things I have to do around that time. Then I'll play sports with them. We do a lot of biking, tennis and golf

What was the best part about being a professional athlete?

When you play sports, you get to see a lot of cities and, if you're lucky, you make enough money to not have to worry about that You get to travel a lot and meet interesting people.

And the flip side?

Did you ever hear the quote, 'A bad day of golf is better than a good day at office?' That is the flip side.

Is there anything that you would like to say to your fans?

I thank the fans for all their support. I think the fans should know I enjoyed playing tennis a lot, and that I had a great time Now I'm playing golf and am having a great time

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

TITLE: GREAT INDIAN PLAYERS AUTHOR: SURESH KUMAR LAU PUBLISHER: SPORTS PUBLICATIONS, DELHI,1998 PAGES: 325 PRICE: Rs.250.00

In the last decade of the 20th century, author Suresh Kumar Lau's pioneering work, brief outlines on the lives and achievements of major sportspersons of India is commendable.

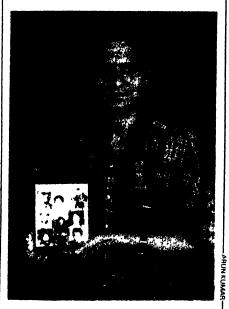
It was a painstaking effort, which took about three years. Lau says, "collection of material was a major problem. I wrote hundreds of letters to the national sports federations, the state associations and the players themselves but rarely got replies. In India, there is no tradition of maintaining records. Except in cricket and tennis records of all other disciplines are not properly maintained. However, I managed to collect material after much research, relying on my records and those of friends."

This explains why the presented material is sometimes lop-sided. In the case of well-known stars like Tendulkar, Azharuddin, Limba Ram or Inder Singh, the profiles are detailed and long but walker Zora Singh and basketball players Anil Kumar Punj and Hari Dutt are written about in just one paragraph.

Arranged alphabetically for easy reference, the book contains concise biographies of over 547 sportspersons from 33 sports, accompanied by 419 photographs. The sports range from archery to yachting. Lau is to be complimented for even including sports like rowing, gymnastics, judo,

carrom, ball badminton and indigenous sports like kabaddi and kho-kho. In these sports with lesser public appeal and media support, reference material is very scanty. By being included in such a book, sportspersons of these less popular sports get due recognition. So the book gives a useful historical perspective of India's achievements in various sports.

Lesser known facts about Indian



Suresh Kumar Lau with his new book *Great* Indian Players

sports emerge from this book. For instance, we learn that gymnast Montu Debnath represented the country in the 1962 Jakarta Asiad and even won a gold medal in the vault event in a meet in erstwhile USSR.

Going down the ages, we learn that gymnast Shyam Lal Khullar was good enough to participate in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and the Universaid. It is an apt reminder that gymnastic talent in India was not so limited as it is at present. Stalwarts in ball badminton like A. Karim, D. Rajaraman and Jayamma Sastry are written about in detail. In carrom, there is just a mention of Anthony Maria Irudayam.

Overall, it is a well-planned book. The index lists the pages on which the accounts of each player appears. In Indian sports, there has always been a vacuum about career details and statistics of even eminen sportspersons. So Lau's book is a step in the right direction. It is a useful ready reckoner.

In any such collection, there is always a dispute about those included and not included. For instance,in football, there are no biographical sketches of some stalwarts of the 1950s like Venkatesh and Ahmed Khan, or in hockey of Inam-ur-Rehman, legendary left winger Jaffer, burly full back,the late Surjit Singh and penalty corner expert Prithipal Singh.

However, some of these omissions could be due to lack of enough available material on these players. In golf, the author has by choice strangely left out some of the current greats like Chiranjeev Milkha Singh and Gaurav Ghei. Collecting material on this new generation of professional golfers should not have been a difficult task. The quality of photographs could have been better.

Originally, the author planned to present the biographical career details and statistics of about 100 eminent sportspersons. However, the publishers persuaded him to extend his research and include all Indian sportspersons who have got the coveted Arjuna Award or achieved some distinction in their respective sport. This meant extra effort but he has made the book very meaningful and a must buy for quiz addicts, journalists and those interested in the history of Indian sports.

Lau, who is a senior lecturer in Physical Education at Satyawati College, University of Delhi, had three years ago written a useful book, The Encyclopaedia of Football, also published by Sports Publications. Novy Kapadia

A PREMATURE EXIT

Former Olympic great FLORENCE GRIFFITH JOYNER dies of a heart seizure



I.S. track star Florence Griffith Joyner, 38, whose blistering speed won her triple gold medals at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, died of an apparent heart seizute recently. Lt. Hector Rivera, a spokesman for the Orange County Sheriff, said that the Orange County Coroner's Office was investigating the cause of death but that there was "no indication whatsoever" of foul play

Griffith Joyner, who holds world records in the 100-and 200-meter events, suffered a heart seizure two years ago while on board an aircraft. She won her gold medals in the 100 and 200 meters and in the 400-meter relay at Seoul.

Griffith Joyner set world records for the 100 and 200 meters in 1988, breaking the 200 mark twice at the Seoul Olympics. "Those records are going to last for another decade," said U.S. Track and Field Association official Tom Serber and added, "We will never see her kind again. Flo-Jo was one of the most special athletes we have ever seen, for her speed, her grace, her beauty."

In addition to her speed, Griffith Joyner stood out from her fellow athletes with her dazzlingly colourful body suits and her long fingernails.

One eye-catching outfit was a purple bodysuit with a turquoise bikini brief over it, but with nothing

on her left leg, a design she referred to as a "one-legger."

At the Olympics, she painted three of her fingernails red, white and blue, and she painted a fourth, gold, to signify her goal. At the 1987 World Championships in Rome, she caused a sensation by running the first two rounds in a skintight suit similar to a speedskater's togs.

Reacting to news of her death, President Clinton said the United States and the world "has lost one of our greatest Olympians."

"We were dazzled by her speed, humbled by her talent, and captivated by her style," Clinton said in a written statement issued in New York, where he was attending the annual U.N. General Assembly.

"Though she rose to the pinnacle of the world of sports, she never forgot where she came from, devoting time and resources to helping children —especially those growing up in our most disadvantaged neighbourhoods," Clinton said.

Griffith Joyner was a co-chair of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

"Our thoughts and prayers go to her husband Al, her daughter Mary and her entire family," Clinton said. Former world 110 meters hurdles champion and friend Greg Foster said: "She died at her home in...California, this morning It's an apparent seizure. She was one of the greatest sprinters ever, male or female."

"The Olympics family is saddened and stunned by her passing," said U.S. Olympic Committee president Bill Hybl. "She was a role model for girls and young women in sports and her legacy will be one that included kindness and an interest in children. She will be missed."

SPECTACLE &

(Clockwise from right) Patrick Rafter won for the second time running. Lindsay Davenport of the USA was the surprise women's winner and gave the Americans something to crow about. Steffi Graf ran out of steam in the pre-quarters against Patty Schnyder after making 33 unforced errors. Sampras did nothing wrong till the semi final, but could not put it past Rafter. Even the gods failed Mary Pierce against Venus Williams. Martina Hingis figures out what went wrong against Davenport. Patty Schnyder after her big win against Graf promptly went and lost to Jana Novotna









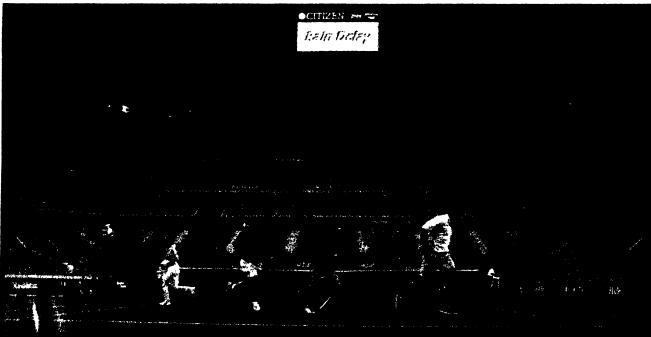
DEBACLE

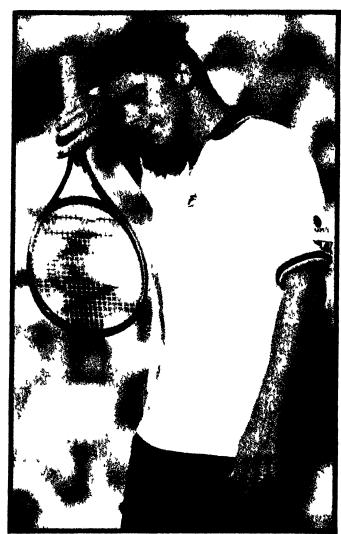
The U.S Open this year saw some sensational victories and some major upsets in both the men's and women's sections













(Clockwise from top extreme left)Carlos Moya had everything going right for him till the semis where he could not take stock of Mark Philippoussis. Monica Seles was in full flow till she ran into teen-queen Martine Hingis and had to exit. Mark Philippoussis set up an all Australian final at the U.S Open after 30 years, playing some incredible tennis, but he could not conquer his compatriot. Brash-queen Anna Kournikova's strokes just could not match those of Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and for once we did not hear any wisecracks from her. Chilean Marcelo Rios lest his sting against Magnus Larsson and flings his racket in disgust. Workers and volunteers run for cover during a rain delay. This year's Open reminded one of Wimbieden on more than one occasion

PHOTOGRAPHS AFP





GREETINGS SIR DON

A tribute to Sir Donald Bradman on his 90th birthday

ANDY O' BRIEN, AUSTRALIA

AN you imagine the public reaction if a famous cricketer did not show up for a glamourous ceremony held in his honour on his birthday? He would have been written off as being conceited etc,etc. But when Sir Donald Bradman did not make an appearance at the massive celebrations on his 90th birthday, it was passed off as "that's the Great Don."

In fact, believe it or not, the biggest

hero at the celebrations was none other than our very own Sachin Tendulkar. He grabbed the spotlight from the likes of Shane Warne and others. But times have changed since Bradman dominated the game. And perhaps Sachin went back to India learning first-hand why the great man is so revered Down Under.

When Donald Bradman made his Test debut in 1928, Australia was an infant nation. Motor cars were the preserve of the well-to-do, radio had only just arrived, and television was a thing of science fiction.

By the time he was two years into his Test career, Bradman already was an Australian legend. By weight of runs, and the dynamic artistry of their accumulation, he was a cricketer beyond anyone that had played the game before.

As a symbol of a young nation, he gave hope where little could be found through the dark days of the Great Depression. He was the nation's focus again, nearly two decades latex, when he twice led Australia against England and became a symbol of normality after the trials of World War II.

The aura which surrounded Bradman then, remarkable though it was, is easy enough to understand. What is truly remarkable is that, 50 years after he retired, and after he completed his 90th birthday, the aura remains undiminished. Perhaps it only got even more enhanced over the years.

A proliferation of Bradman books continue to pour off the presses. The Bradman Museum draws people to his boyhood home at Bowral in droves. "Bradman" bars continue to be highend sellers, and media people of all persuasions still seek him out for the 'ultimate' interview.

Two new books are in the stalls this month. One is a reprint of Bradman's definitive coaching book of 1958, The Art of Cricket, which clearly is full of timeless wisdom. The Ironbark legends series has launched a momentous Bradman publication which deals as much with his impact on the Australian social landscape as on his cricket.

It is an enormous tribute to the man

and his deeds, central as they were to the growing self-confidence of an independent Australia through a time when the country was still finding its identity.

Runs, of course, are a big part of the Bradman heritage. By the time he had rattled up 974 of them in seven Test innings in England in 1930 (average 139.14), he didn't even need identification. English newspaper posters of the time would simply state "He's Out", or on one famous and rare occasion, "O", and everybody knew what it meant.

But there was more to it than that. His bearing, his economy of words, his administrative insight, his selection skills...all of these lent a mystique to the Bradman persona which is as strong in the modern, cosmopolitan Australia of today as it ever was in the insular world of the 1930s.

The literary record attests to that. In the latest *Legends* book, for instance, Steve Waugh sums it up from a modern player's perspective:

"He is the symbol of Australian cricket, the heartbeat, the inspiration, the image of all that is good in sport and life...the baggy green cap assumes even greater importance for the knowledge that Sir Donald destroyed opposing teams and rewrote all the record books while wearing it. For me, it inspires confidence, pride, commitment, courage and loyalty."

In the same book, former ACB chairman Bob Parish talks of Bradman's contribution to the administration and legislation of cricket.

"A man of great integrity, his greatness as an administrator lay principally in his vision and in his encyclopaedic knowledge of the game and its rich history. And, whatever his age, he always came to the table with the ideas and energy of the young and progressive. This is why he has remained a vibrant and relevant figure half a century after the end of his playing days."

Bradman had, after all, battled the Board on several celebrated occasions as a player, so he knew the downside of their attitudes. He was also sufficiently progressive to endorse the

switch to coloured clothing when it became an issue in the re-unification negotiations of 1979 after the World Series Cricket split.

The best tributes ever paid to Bradman, however, undoubtedly were those which reflected his skill as a batsman. This remains the area in which his stature is unchallenged and untouched, despite the small army of international champions who have walked the stage over the last 50 years.

One of the best assessments of his innate skill, his competitive drive, and his work ethic, was that made by the celebrated commentator Alan McGilvray in his book *The Game Is Not The Same.* As a contemporary who played with and against Bradman, and a commentator of 50 years experience, McGilvray was well qualified to judge. He wrote:

"There was a calculating ruthlessness to Bradman's batting. He would rarely talk to anybody on the field. He always seemed to be in total communion with himself, his concentration maintained at levels which allowed no intrusion whatever from those around him.

"He knew the value of his own ability. He knew bowlers would devise all manner of schemes to try and dismiss him. The very stature his extraordinary skill gave him demanded he concentrate that much harder than anybody else...

"...Bradman had an almost perfect co-ordination of eye, brain and body that set him apart. He had powerful, sinewy legs and forearms, and small feet that allowed him to shuffle into position with lightning speed. His reflexes were sharp and true, his eyesight piercing.

"But above all he had a mind which was quicker than any other I have known to size up where a ball would pitch, its movement and its worth.

"His placement was uncanny, his range of shots unmatched....when he unwound into a pull shot or leaned back to cut, he did so with great flourish. In essence, he simply did everything right."

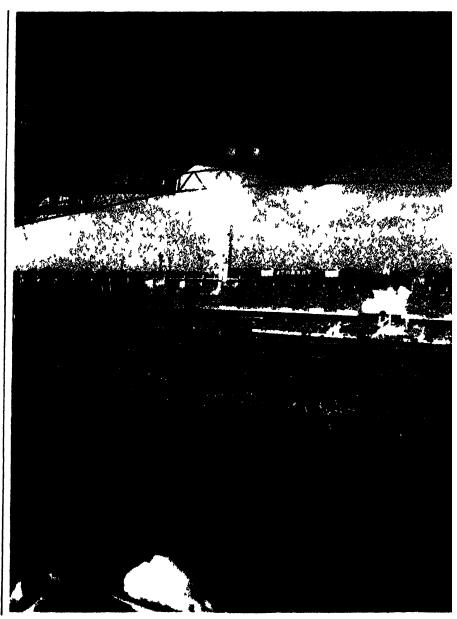
Now, the Don is in the nineties again. Is another century too much to ask?

FROM NOVY KAPADIA NEW DELHI

S Delhi was burning in the altermath of the assassination of former Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi the erstwhile secretary of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) Mr Vidya Charan Shukla made some important disclosures on November 7 1984 At a hastily assembled and sparsely-attended press briefing Mr Shukla said that the concept of the National Games will be revived to help in the development of international standard sports infrastructure in the country

He also said that it would be a biennial event, held in different cities Finally Mr Shukla added that to commemorate Mrs. Gandhi s contribution to Indian sports, the National Games will have a permanent opening date. November 19 (the late Prime Minister's birthday)" It was also decided that since Delhi had the existing Asiad '82 infrastructure, it would be the venue of the revived National Games in 1985.

According to Mr Shukla's agenda, in the time span of 13 years from 1985 to 1998 at least six National Games should have been held. Instead four have been staged thus far—Delhi 1985. Thiruvananthapuram 1987. Pune 1994 and Bangalore 1997. As is evident the biennial event concept.



GONE FOR A SIX?

Too much politicisation and postponements have ruined the NATIONAL GAMES

has got shattered After the 1987 National Games, rampant politicisation has devalued this notion. In the 90s, frequent postponement and delays have reduced the importance of the sports jambooree

The Manipur National Games were due to be held in October 1998 but they are now being postponed for the third time and may be held in the summer months of 1999

Sportspersons get fed up of such constant chopping and changing of dates as it mars their preparation for the event.



The opening ceremony of the '97 Bangalore Games at the Kanthareeva Stadium. The sporting jamboree was sponsored by Videocon along with 19 other corporate houses

At the approach of the new millenium, it is time for stock taking and to decide if this concept is feasible or in need of some re-adjustment. It looks as though the concept has gone for a six. The idea of starting each National Games on a fixed day, November 19th, has also been forgotten. Only the 1985 National Games in Delhi, commenced on the late Mrs Gandhi's birthday. The 1987 event at Thiruvananthapuram started

in December. In 1994, the Pune Games were held in January. Whilst in 1997 at Bangalore, they were staged in June. Also there are serious doubts about the maximum utilisation of the existing infrastructure.

The first part of Mr Shukla's claim, the creation of world-class stadia and international sports infrastructure does take place. But in all these years no plans have been made to ensure that the stadia are used regularly so that a genuine sports atmosphere is created in the country. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) keeps passing the buck to the National Sports Federations. The latter claim they are hamstrung for cash. So there is the usual muddle. The National Games become a grand showpiece. when they are staged for politicians to parade themselves and mouth cliches about development. The IOA must beware of the pitfalls and not let the National Games Movement become a routine.

The Spartakiad in the erstwhile USSR and East Germany led to mass involvement in sports, unearthing new talent and sparked off a massive sports atmosphere in those countries. Somehow the National Games movement in India has not been able to emulate such ideals. A grassroots movement in Indian sports has just not taken place and the four National Games staged since 1985 have not really led to any mass participation in sports. In Pune and Bangalore, lots of people came to watch especially exotic events like gymnastics or popular events like football, kabaddi, athletics and swimming but there has been no discernible increase in the number of youth taking part in sports from these two cities.

The politicisation of the Games in a big way started after 1987. The next Games were awarded to Punjab. This was primarily done because the existing central Rajiv Gandhi government wanted to prove that conditions in Punjab were normal. The terrorist movement in Punjab in the Eighties had hindered daily life in this most prosperous of Indian states. Staging the National Games in Punjab

was like a political message, that the insurrectionists were on the run. The political agenda did not quite work out to suit the IOA. Infrastructure was developed in Ludhiana, Patiala, Jalandhar and Amritsar. But by 1989 it was obvious that Punjab was still unsafe to stage the Games. They were postponed to a further unspecified date in 1990.

By 1991 with Suresh Kalmadi emerging as a bigwig in Indian sports, the National Games were shifted to his constituency, Pune. The ambitious Kalmadi used this event as an image building exercise. The Games had an overall expenditure of Rs. 50 crores as Kalmadi constructed the Shri Shiv Chhatrapati Sports City at Balewadi near Pune. The stadia, the velodrome,

The Pune National
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extracting money....

the Olympic-size swimming pool, the games village, the indoor stadium and gymnasium were impressive but now they just remain monuments of grandeur and there is little sports activity in them.

History remembers the 1994
National Games as the privatisation of sports in India. Kalmadi emulated
Peter Ueberroth's feat in the 1984 Los
Angeles Olympics of roping in enough private sponsors to reduce
government expenditure. Kalmadi applied Manmohanics to the National Games and ensured they were financially viable. The main sponsor,
Bajaj Auto, a Pune-based company contributed almost Rs. 1 crore as sponsorship and an equivalent amount on diverse forms of publicity.
Besides the main sponsor, about 50

WILL MANIPUR HOLD THE GAMES AT ALL?

ACONTEXT. Suresh Kalmadi once said, "mega events like the National Games are useful in drawing the youth to the national mainstream. So we are awarding the National Games to Manipur to spread the Olympic message amongst the youth of that region and provide international facilities in that region." It was also hoped that the Games in the North-East would boost the interest in sports like boxing, football and weightlifting in that region.

IOA reports suggested massive enthusiasm for the Games. Kalmadi even said that the state government employees had voluntarily sacrificed a day's salary every month to enable construction of the infrastructure. Realising from the follies of Pune (Balewadi sports complex) and Bangalore, the IOA advised Manipur to construct smaller stadia which could be utilised more effectively once the sporting extravaganza were over.

But then history repeated itself. S. Lokeshwar Singh, a hockey official from Manipur, said in the last week of August that the swimming pool and cycling velodrome were not yet ready. He also said that the astro-turf had reached Imphal but had not been laid.

Then there were the inevitable political tussles within the Manipur organising committee. R.K. Ronendrajit Singh, secretary of a private body called Sports Movement Committee, has begun a fast onto death since August 13, demanding postponement of the Games. His reason was that if the constructions were completed in a hurry, they would be sub-standard and not beneficial to the people of his region.

Within the IOA also there was divided opinion on staging the Games. Suresh Kalmadi was keen that the Games be held in time. IOA sources also reveal that the underground terrorists had been contacted and their assurance sought that they would not disturb the Games. Kalmadi was confident that the terrorists would support the movement of the Games in their state and would not cause any disruptions. This was one of the major reasons for his wanting the Games to be held in time.

However finally excessive rain and incomplete stadia forced the IOA to postpone the event indefinitely. The Games in Manipur have got further jinxed because of IOA's factional politics. Some IOA members aligned to the secretary Randhir Singh want the Games shifted to Punjab where the infrastructure is ready. The compensation theory is being put forth. However, Kalmadi and others are adamant that the Games will be held in Manipur.

To add to the quandary, some terrorist groups have threatened to shoot local sports officials in Manipur if they permit the Games to be staged outside their state. As has been the pattern in previous National Games, there is excessive politicisation in the choice of venue and staging the Games. The dominant discourse in discussions revolving around the National Games have always been political. So it is not surprising that national or IOA politics have always played a dominant role in the selection of venues and conduct of the National Games.

other sponsors were roped in who paid sums ranging from Rs.5 to 25 lakhs. Each of the 27 sports disciplines had a separate sponsor. Kalmadi also set a trend of unprecedented television coverage for a sports event other than cricket in India. The live telecast was as much as seven hours per day for ten days and a daily one hour capsule in the night.

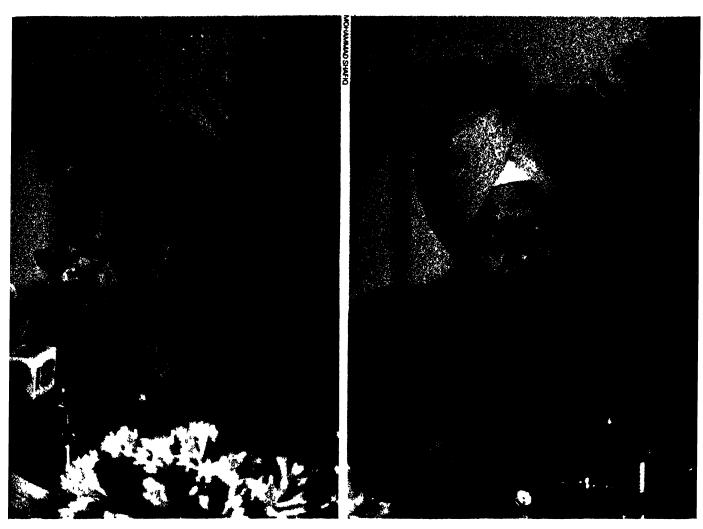
The Pune Games were an instance of how positive politicisation can prove to be beneficial. Kalmadi has always believed that sports loving politicians are most suitable for the organisation of Indian sports as they know the tricks of the trade in extracting money and setting lethargic government machinery in action.

However even the 1994 Games were blighted by time delay. They were originally slated for January 1993 but the stadia were not ready. Then came the next date, October 1993. However there was a natural catastrophe, the devastating Latur (Maharashtra) earthquake which led to massive loss of life and property and to further postponement. They were finally held in January 1994.

Kalmadi oozed confidence that the Balewadi sports complex would be fully utilised in the years to come. But again between the idea and the reality there falls the shadow. Four years after the Pune Games, the Balewadi complex is sparsely used. Kalmadi, who is the president of the Amateur Athletic Federation of India (AAFI), shifted the Permit Meet athletic events to Pune for two years. Otherwise except for some local events and local camps the stadia remain under-utilised.

The grandiose plans to set up a sports academy or a LIC-sponsored gymnastics academy has fallen by the wayside. Due to inadequate public transport and limited personal transport, it is not possible for sportspersons to fravel large distances for training. So the whole concept of the Pune sports city was over-ambitious.

The astute Randhir Singh, secretary of the IOA, was forced to admit in



Indian Olympic Association president Suresh Kalmadi used the 1994 Pune National Games as an image-building exercise

1997 that the sports city concept in Balewadi was not a roaring success. He said, "The sports city just outside Pune is under-utilised. So we are now insisting that sports stadia should be built within a city to make them accessible."

History repeated itself in the 1997 Bangalore National Games. The event was due to be staged in 1996 but kept getting postponed. They were finally staged in the summer months of June 1997. Water shortage was a major problem for the competitors. From the Bangalore experience and problems in getting ready for the Games it does seem that two years is too short a time for preparation. Maybe the IOA should reconsider the

time span period between each National Games. Some IOA members have even suggested that the sports disciplines in each National Games should be spread to more than two cities in a state. In 1994, the Games were held at Pune and Mumbai and in 1997 in Bangalore and Mysore.

Costs escalated from Rs.25 crores to Rs.125 crores but Asia's "Silicon Valley" provided many corporate sponsors. Besides the main sponsor Videocon, the Games organising committee also roped in 19 other sponsors. As the stadia are within the main city of Bangalore they are being utilised more frequently. So in terms of generating funds and developing sports infrastructure, the Bangalore Games were a reasonable success.

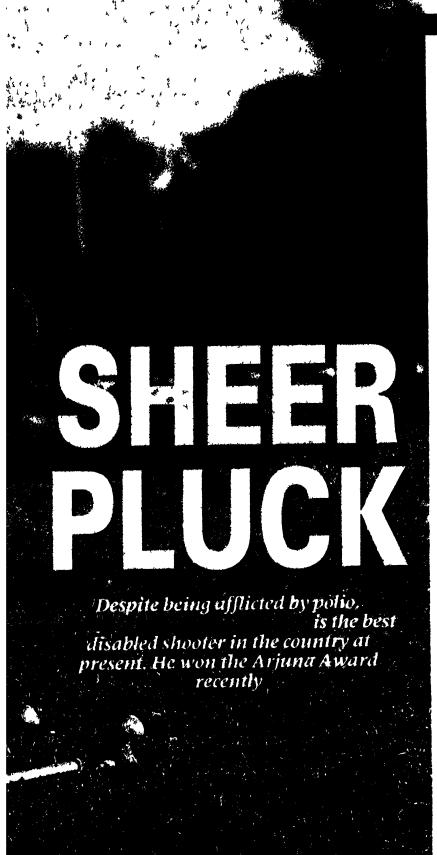
The Games in Manipur have already been postponed twice. At the closing ceremony of the Bangalore

Randhir Singh, secretary of the IOA, insists that sports stadia should be built within a city to make it accessible for athletes and spectators

National Games, the IOA president, Suresh Kalmadi proudly stated that Manipur will be ready to stage the Games in the summer of 1998. Sadly, the progress in construction of stadia and developing sports infrastructure was tardy.

The IOA then announced that the Manipur Games will be staged from October 4-14. Doordarshan made plans for the telecast. Sponsors were sounded and several IOA officials inspected the sites. The schedule of events was also announced. However, then came the bombshell. The National Games in Manipur were postponed for the third time. Now it is uncertain when they will be held. IOA sources state that the probable date is May or June 1999.

PHOTOGRAPHS MOHAMMAD SHAFIQ

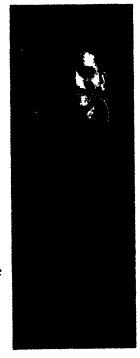


BY NOVY KAPADIA, NEW DELHI

T the Wills World Cup in 1996, commenting on the difference between Indian and Australian cricketers, Mark Waugh remarked, "In our country, Test cricketers are heroes but, in India, they are treated as demi-gods 'Mark Waugh's astute observation is very pertinent

Analysing the fissiporous tendencies in some parts of India, many sociologists have also felt that, at present, the Hindi films and the national cricket team are the major unifying symbols in the nation Viewed in such a context, for any sportsperson to overshadow a major Test cricketer at a public function is an incredible feat

But such an incident occurred in the recent National **Sports Awards** function at the glittering Ashoka hall ın Rashtrapati Bhavan The cynosure of all eyes, in the beginning, was ace cricketer Sachin Tendulkar who was receiving the coveted Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award However, when the polioafflicted shooter, the stocky Naresh Kumar Sharma stepped forward to receive the Arjuna Award,



the tumultuous and spontaneous applause even surpassed the ovation that Sachin received

It was a tribute to the courage and faith of this 26-year-old whom fate had dealt such a cruel blow early in his life. Even the customary apathetic crowd in Delhi reacted emotionally.

The story of Naresh Kumar Sharma is a saga of endeavour and

perseverance despite many odds. The storyline is typical. A family of agriculturists migrated from Jammu to Delhi in search of a more lucrative occupation. Naresh, born on the fifth of May 1972 is the youngest of four brothers. He suffered the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune early in life.

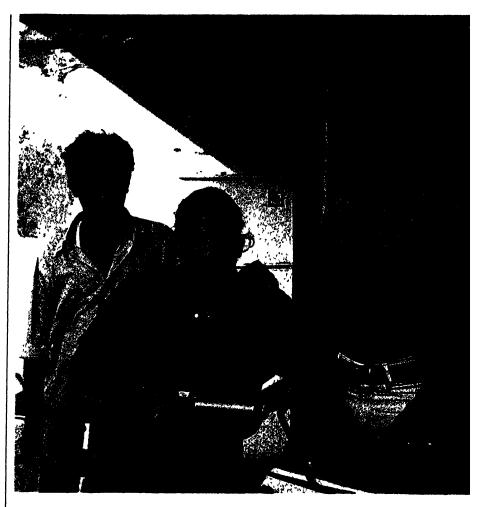
He narrates the sad incident which changed his life. "I was young and developed pneumonia. The doctors at Safdarjung Hospital gave me the wrong injections which led to an attack of polio." He has been handicapped and on crutches ever since.

The turning point in his life came in the form of a vision in 1993. He says, "I dreamt one night that I should take part in shooting." He admits that it was destiny that took nim to the Tughlakabad shooting range. He had finished his graduation by correspondence from the University of Delhi. Searching for some meaning and occupation in life, he acted impulsively and went to the Tughlakabad shooting range. He was instinctively attracted to the sport. He picked up the nuances of this sport by watching other shooters practise.

As he says, "I was self-taught.
Nobody coached or guided me.
Initially, my family even discouraged me as they felt it was an expensive hobby. It was only my mother who took my side and, with her blessings, I continued shooting."

His family owned an air rifle and he practised with that. After a year of strenuous practice, he developed contidence. His only mode of transport, to and fro was the three wheeler autorickshaw. From his house near the Palam airport to the shooting range and back cost him about Rs. 300 daily. However, shooting gave him a meaning in life. The lonely boy developed friends and self-confidence.

Naresh recalls those apprenticeship days by saying, "The other shooters were always helpful. Even stars like Mansher Singh and Jaspal Rana always encouraged me and gave me tips. Encouraged by their support, I



Naresh with his brother Kishen and Mukesh

took to shooting seriously in 1995."

The National Disabled Sports Federation based in Bangalore entered Naresh Kumar, Sharma for an international event in Finland. The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) gifted him an air pistol which costs about Rs. 50,000.

Since the trip to Finland, there was no looking back for Naresh Kumar Sharma. He has represented India in ten international meets for the physically handicapped in the air pistol, free pistol and sports pistol events. In the 2nd Hessian trophy he won a bronze medal. In the 3rd Hessian trophy at Germany in 1997, he won two silver and one bronze medal.

In the Australian championships for the disabled in 1997 at Brisbane,

he won a bronze medal. Overall he has travelled to Germany four times, Finland, Denmark, Australia, USA and Spain. In June 1998, at Santander in Spain, he qualified for the 2000 Sydney Olympics for the disabled. His improvement has been rapid and he is now ranked No.9 in the world.

Naresh proudly says, "No Indian shooter has yet qualified for the Sydney Olympics. I am the first to do so."

His adaptability, when travelling abroad, is commendable. At home, he is a vegetarian but realising the difficulty of acquiring such food abroad, he acquired a taste for eggs and chicken soup. His diet is now much more varied. Travelling has given him a wider perspective of life and immense confidence.

At the national level, he has won many prizes. For these consistent achievements, the Department of Sports of the Government of India



rightly gave him the Arjuna award. The award carries a cash prize of Rs.50,000 which should be a welcome bonus for Naresh, to purchase costly ammunition. However, as he jocularly remarked, "Most of the money was used up repaying loans and debts to the NRAI and others."

Many organisations have been kind to Naresh Kumar Sharina but the expenses keep mounting. The Sports Authority of India (SAI) provides him ammunition for ten to lifteen rounds of shooting. The Union Sports Ministry has donated about Rs.50,000 for the purchase of an Austrian air pistol. But each pellet costs about Rs.7.50, so 100 shots mean an expense of Rs.750.

Naresh is still unemployed, so the expenses are staggering. The family income is ample, but not luxurious. His father works in Sita Travels. His brothers Vijay, Kishen and Mukesh have a refrigeration shop in South

Posing with his imported air pistol, which costs Rs.50,000

Delhi. Naresh often sits there after practice.

Naresh hopes that the Arjuna Award will boost his chances of getting a job. He has applied for a job in Customs, Railways, the State Bank of India and Indian Afrlines. The IOA secretary, Randhir Singh has approached some organisations to either provide Naresh with sponsorship or a job but all efforts have been in vain so far.

After years of toil and heavy expenses, Naresh is getting disgruntled and frustrated. He says, "If I am unable to meet my expenses, I will have to give up shooting. How long can I keep borrowing money? My disability is always held against me when applying for a job. Sponsors remain indifferent to handicapped sportspersons."

Sheer diligence has led to success for Naresh. He leaves for the shooting range in the morning and spends nine hours there, six days a week. When he does not have enough ammunition for practise he opts for trigger practice, concentration exercises and dry practice, like perfecting the position for holding the pistol. Naresh remarks, "Shooting is my life and hobby. My only other recreation is watching other sports on TV but I have no favourite player or favourite sport."

Despite the exorbitant expenses and frustration at not getting a job, Naresh still feels that shooting has given him a new meaning in life. He explains, "Success in shooting has given me respect, confidence and fame. It has given me ambitions, and enabled me to travel and dream." Earlier, he was drifting through life but now he is a man with a mission who has overcome physical handicaps to achieve sporting success.



...says VIV RICHARDS as he talks about his daily life, Tendulkar's batting and the state of international cricket

HE was known as King Richards when he donned the West Indian maroon baggy cap in the cricket fields of the world. Apart from his international pursuits, Richards represented five domestic sides in England, Australia and the Caribbean. The former England captain Peter Roebuck and cricket columnist dubbed him the 'Greatest since Bradman'.

Richards played in 121 Test matches, scoring 8540 runs at an average of 50.23. In 187 ODI's he amassed 6721 runs at an average of 47.00 and also grabbed an impressive 118 wickets. The 46-year-old Richards still lives in his birthplace of St. John's in Antigua.

Here are excerpts from the interview held at Kuala Lumpur's Kilat Club.

Has West Indies cricket reached its lowest ebb after enjoying years of success?

We have had success for a number of years and when that happens, people expect you to always do well. Funnily enough that never quite happens. After the successful years, there was a period when we were in the dumps. In the last two years we have tried to do well and be at the number two spot, hopefully reaching number one in the future

Every thing in life has its phases and West Indies cricket went through a

slump. I would like to think that things are now in place for us to claim the number one spot once again. We are prepared for the development that can take cricket into the next generation. I am reasonably positive about that.

There is a common belief in cricketing circles that the downside of West Indian cricket started since its defeat at the hands of India in the final of the 1983 World Cup at Lord's. Do you agree with this?

INTERVIEWED BY ANIRBAN SIRCAR, KUALA LUMPUR

I am not prepared to think that our defeat against India in the 1983 World Cup final was the start of our slump period. Because in the series that immediately followed, we beat the newly crowned 'world champions' by five matches to one. So, anyone who thinks otherwise is ludicrous.

Why are the West Indies not producing world-class fast bowlers anymore, especially after Holding, Roberts, etc?

It is not easy for any team to produce bowlers like Holding, Roberts and Garner simultaneously, or for that matter Walsh and Ambrose. However, as I said, things are now in place to produce some good bowlers. But, the likes of Franklyn Rose, Mervyn Dillon and, to some extent, Nixon McLean are our future. Also, we have some good young talents in the team that will tour South Africa. They are blessed with enormous talent. It depends on how quickly they come through and learn new tricks.

What is the state of your relationship with Brian Lara?

I have had a reasonably good rapport with Brian over the years. He has

given me the green light to advise him on any aspect of his cricket. He has given me his phone number to call him anytime at home. I am free to discuss the game at any time and whatever may be affecting him in any department of the game and also from the West Indies point of view. So, those options are certainly open. I have travelled with him on numerous tlights to and from London and we have discussed the game at length.

What has been your contribution to cricket in Antigua, apart from bringing the team here to Malaysia?

Well, at last, I have become the ambassador at large for my country. It is something which I thoroughly enjoy. I thought that after I had packed up my bag and obviously gone into retirement, that would have been the appropriate time for me to sit back, relax and just enjoy myself. I have found these days that it is not the case anymore. Actually, now I am more in demand than when I played the game.

How do you react to Sachin Tendulkar being compared to Sir Donald Bradman by none other than the Don himself?

I think it is great that Sachin has been doing well. Sir Donald was a magnificent player and someone of Sachin's calibre today is truly exciting to watch. I think that the game needs this and long may it last. The game will be all the more richer if Sachin continues.

Both Lara and Sachin are wonderful cricketers. Could you compare the two in their styles of playing the game?

Never. I do not make comparisons. What I can say though at this moment is that Sachin seems to be in wonderful form. No one ever makes comparisons when people are having a bad time. Comparisons are only made when things are looking up. But, I would like to think, irrespective of Sachin's form in this tournament. that he is in beautiful form. Sachin is a magnificent player and I hope at least for India's sake and his sake that he continues.

What are your predictions for the next World Cup?

Any of the top teams can take the World Cup next year. Looking at the way the Sri Lankans have played, they have really done well in the past two or three years. We have seen that the Sri Lankans have beaten some world class sides on their ascent to the top of one-day cricket and are still continuing to do so. These are signs that the game has opened up much more. The game has improved to such a degree that any of the top four or five teams could actually end up winning the Cup.

Would you like to comment on the allegations about the reported strife among players within the West Indian squad, that could well be the reason behind their poor showing.

This is something that I am not truly fully aware of. You always find that when things do not work out well,

there are rumours about this and that. I transmitted games even as I was I am not ready to jump on the bandwagon and be a Sherlock Holmes. There are going to be times when things are difficult when people get on each other's nerves. But, I think it would be rather sad of me to comment on any specific thing of which I know nothing about.

In what way has cricket changed since the days you played the game.

No, I don't think that the way cricket is being played nowadays has changed since I played last. You will always find



that the batting and bowling will always remain the same. It is the fielding and the fitness levels of the players that seems to have improved radically. All these are the features of modern day cricket.

Do you think that cricket's popularity in the Caribbean is under threat from basketball and

No, I do not think so, simply because basketball and football has always been around and so has cable television channels like ESPN which

growing up. It is only that at times people have other interests.

I think what the cricket fraternity in the Caribbean should do quickly is to get the young kids back into cricket. A coaching package has to be introduced which excites them and, until we do that, cricket could suffer in popularity. I do believe that kids growing up today in the West Indies need something rather enjoyable and if they are happy with the people that are teaching them the subject, then it will be all the more better for West Indian cricket.

How do you spend a typical day back home in St. John's?

Well, Viv Richards is still a beach bum. I still get to the beach as often as I can Five thirty in the morning I swim. I work out to keep myself reasonably in shape After that it's breakfast and basically a nice, casual day. I like to go fishing when I can. So, the options are reasonably open and I like it this way, where I am not in demand and have a choice to do things my way on a day to day basis.

Which other sports interests you apart from cricket?

I love my five-a-side soccer. Golf and tennis have been a big part of my life. I find time for that in the afternoon.

Could you go through those moments from the 1983 World Cup final at Lord's when you were blazing away at the Indian attack, until Kapil Dev took that magnificent catch running backwards?

I would like to think that it must have been India's greatest cricketing moment. You must have that fully documented in your archives. You know exactly what happened that day, so why should I repeat it. It would be rather foolish of me to keep repeating myself, which I have done on numerous occasions in the past. I think we all know what happened that day. In a game of cricket, it is never over until the 'fat lady sings' or it is 'never over until it's over'.

DESERVING CHAMPS

MOHUN BAGAN wins the KBL Federation Cup in style

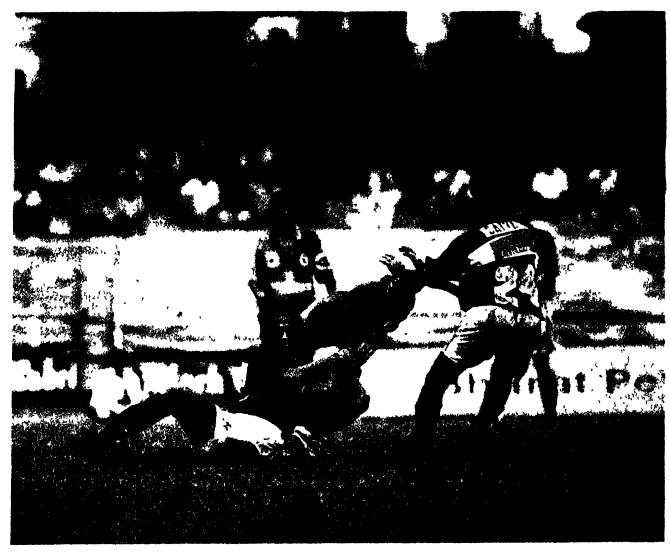
BY DHIMAN SARKAR

HEN coaches err, it is almost never on the side of caution. Three decisions by East Bengal coach Manoranjan

Bhattacharya, one of India's best-ever defenders, back-fired terribly. The

Champions Bagan with the KBL Federation Cup. They received a cheque of Rs.20 lakhs which was awarded by UB Group boss Vijay Mallya (inset)





Bagan's Satyabrata Bhowmick and Satyajit Chatterjee obstruct Bhaichung Bhartla in the KBL Federation Cup final

result: in the final of the Kalyani Black Label Federation Cup, Mohun Bagan cruised to the national club championship title, leaving their arch rivals pondering over what may have been.

In doing so, the green-and-maroons ended a three-year wait and earned the right to represent India in the next season's Asian Cup Winners' Cup.

With first choice goalkeeper Bibhas Ghosh injured, Bhattacharya ignored the present No.2 goalie Arpan Dey, throwing Kalyan Chowbey into the deep end of the pool instead. As it turned out, Chowbey, returning after a long sickness-induced lay-off, sank like a stone. His tentative and jittery ways made the usually reliable custodian the millstone around East Bengal's neck. Co-ordination was at a premium between the India U-21 captain and East Bengal's defence.

Lack of regular play had also rusted his sense of anticipation, causing Chowbey—more than once—to leave his line, only to be stranded thereafter. The first time he did this, I.M. Vijayan said 'thank you' by heading home. By the 21st minute, the match, therefore, was over as a contest for East Bengal, as they had taken in a freak goal earlier.

That was in the first quarter. Amit Das' long-ranger cannoned off a defender, changed direction totally and bulged the netting on the far post leaving Chowbey, unsighted by his

mates, looking helpless.

Bhattacharya's pulling out Rennedi Singh early was another move that boomeranged. In the absence of the hard-working midfielder, who thrives on the left flank, East Bengal failed to use the natural width of the park. Rennedi's ability to win balls in the middle third began to be felt and soon, Mohun Bagan had a free run of things on the right.

Bhattacharya later said Rennedi, who had scored the match-winner in the semi-final against Churchill Brothers in Siliguri, was carrying an injury. The coach knows best but the mobile medio certainly did not look it.

Persisting with Raman Vijayan on slushy underfoot conditions—the turf was left churned up soon after the kick-off—too did not help East

SHODDY PLANNING...

.... spoilt the smooth running of the country's apex tournament

BAD grounds and shoddy planning overall robbed the third Kalyani Black Label Cup of the sheen usually associated with the country's apex knockout soccer showpiece.

The timing of the tournament give Calcutta teams an advantage. While all other teams suffered from a lack of match practice, the early start of the Calcutta league helped the city's entrants to get into better shape. Also, since rains hit the country between July and September, maintaining the parks was easier said than done.

Save for Bangalore, turf conditions drew condemnation almost everywhere else. Mohun Bagan coach Amal Dutta blasted the washed-out Cooperage Stadium at Mumbai before and after their quarter final against SBT. It later transpired that Western India Football Association (WIFA) itself were reluctant to host the ties there because of the monsoon.

Delhi was not a footballer's paradise either. But among all the venues chosen for this tournament, to give it a more

India-wide look, Siliguri was the worst.

Soaked at the seam, this gateway to the hills was gasping for some sunshine when football came to town. The ground was covered for a lengthy period but it wasn't enough. One day before the match, re-laying and rolling continued.

Minutes after kick-off, the ground looked like a minefield. Things were so bad near the centre-circle that the ball had to be chipped over whenever it fell into that area. With players slipping and sliding more often than they were on their feet, football went for a toss. It was fortuitous that nobody got seriously injured.

Uncertainty over the the dates of the final and the losing semi-finalists clash too put the championship in the news for the wrong reasons.

First, the final was deferred by one week, after the fixtures were released, apparently to accommodate the sponsors. However, realising that Doordarshan would have problems slotting the match on a

Sunday, September 13, it was brought forward.

Then the West Bengal Sports Ministry raised objections. It issued a fiat that no matches would be held at Calcutta's Salt Lake Stadium (both the final and the third-place play-off was scheduled there) unless gate receipts were donated to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund because of the floods in North Bengal.

In a bid to get around this, local hosts IFA, already at loggerheads with the state government over distribution of tickets, got the government to levy Rs. 10 on each ticket. The paying public paid double, while neither the state association nor the parent body donated a paisa—apparently because their constitutions forbid them to!

But the mother of all absurdities was slotting the play-off tie after the final. It was probably a never-before occurrence, something that must have had even Ripley struggling to believe it.

Dhiman Sarkar

Bengal's cause. Balance has always been a problem on slippery grounds for this lanky striker. Not only did it blunt his otherwise intelligent game, it left Bhaichung Bhutia as the team's only targetman. Only belatedly was Dipendu Biswas introduced.

Bhaichung's national club championship jinx continues. He has played five editions of this competition, but four final berths later is still looking for his first winners'

medal. R. r. Vijayan, too, a long wait ended on Saturday, September 12. By his standards, that is. This was his maiden Kalyani Black Label Cup final and he showed that his love affair with India's apex knockout club competition endures by being first-time lucky. Overall, it was the 'Trissur Typhoon's' eighth title in as many title-round appearances, the old Federation Cup included. Not for nothing is it said, if Vijayan plays this meet's final, put your money on his team and you will never lose.

Given the stranglehold Mohun

Bagan had over the final, the margin of victory could have been healthier. Vijayan's superb 20-yard effort hit the crossbar and a goal-line save thwarted the peerless Chima Okerie—robbed of his usual mobility on the heavy turf but always a threat nonetheless—once. Vijayan was also denied what looked a genuine penalty. Mohun Bagan midfield's better mobility and the mature football sense of Vijayan, Chima, Satyajit Chatterjee and Man-of-the-Tournament Das, among others, lent more variety to their



A midfield tangle between a JCT player and Sporting's Cassius Owino

attacks.

East Bengal may not have had as many goal-scoring opportunities but their overall thrust made the game absorbing. Through early down-the-flank sorties, they probed and stretched Mohun Bagan's defence but marshalled by Sammy Omollo, the back-four repulsed the early threats. And, of course, there was Hemanta Dora to script last-gasp rescue acts when required.

A stunning Bhaichung left-footer early on, brought out the best from him. Dora's anticipation and confidence has never been better. This was clearly seen in the way he plucked the ball from Dipendu's feet late in the match. He was voted 'Best Goalkeeper' in the competition.

Both finalists rode lone-goal semi final wins. Mohun Bagan were bailed out by Chima, whose 81st minute strike, finally snuffed out Mohammedan Sporting's resistance in the 2-1 win. And East Bengal

huffed and puffed their way to a 1-0 win over Churchill Brothers on a Kanchenjunga Stadium turf in Siliguri, hammered out of shape by incessant rain. The sun had gone on a holiday and football was grounded on a pulp-soft park.

With reigning champions Salgaocar exiting in the pre-quarter finals (all last year's quarter finalists were given a bye into the round of 16) through a last-minute goal by State Bank of Travancore's S. Ignatius and a new-look Churchill Brothers making



the penultimate round the tournament packed a few surprises, not the least of which was Mohammedan Sporting s winning spree

Making do with a budget that is a fraction of what Mohun Bagan and East Bengal earmarked for team building this season Mohammedan Sporting showed their local league win over Mohun Bagan was not an aberration when they conquered former national league champions JCT and Punjab State Electricity Board (PSEB) to set up a semi final showdown with Mohun Bagan

In winning both ties after regulation time (Cassius Owino scored the golden goal in the pre-quarter final and the quarter final was decided in the shootout) the black-and-white brigade showed true

ROLL OF HONOUR

Champions. Mohun Bagan (Rs 20

Runners-up. East Bengal (Rs 15 lakh

Third: Churchill Brothers (Rs 10

Fourth: Mohammedan Sporting

Man Of The Tournament: Amit Das (Mohun Bagan)

Best Goalkeeper: Hemanta Dora (Mohun Bagan)

Highest Scorer; Cyril Barreto (Churchill Brothers)

grit Goalkeeper Santi Majumdar s career seems to have got a second wind this season His high consistency was an important factor in Mohammedan Sporting ,

Their end however was an antı-climax On a mud park Mohammedan Sporting lost the play off for the third place to

Churchill Brothers—the only goal coming from debutant Elvis

Alternating between crests and troughs for the past two seasons, the Goa team exploited an easy draw -made easier by Tollygunge Agragamı s unexpected 0-1 loss to BSF in the round of 16 through a Gouranga Pal goal—to make the last-four stage

The Goa League champions whipped qualifiers Langsning SC of Meghalaya 7-0, before riding Ghanaian Philip Mensah's



Md. Sporting custodien Santi Mezumdar tries to foil a Vijayan attempt. Bagan edged out the other Calcutta team in the semis

controversial golden goal, off a penalty, to beat BSF and make the semi-final. In their first match, Cyril Barreto scored four goals. He scored no more and still got the highest scorer's prize.

Churchill could get no further.

Despite the efforts of Ghanaian central defender Osumanu Husseini and goalkeeper Edward Ansah, East Bengal proved far too superior, the slender margin notwithstanding.

F.C.Kochin's first KBL Cup appearance ended in the finals' first round. The young team—now that the Vijayans, Ancheris, Chapmans and the Dineshs have left for more lucrative pastures—ran into Mohun Bagan, after winning the South Zone qualifiers. They were run aground by Chima's brace.

The team, comprising mostly of under-19 TFA players, is thin on

experience but their speed and skill caught the eye. If nurtured well, defender Prabhjyot Singh, mid-fielder Noel Wilson and forwards Nitil Pradhan and Najeeb should serve Indian soccer well.

With three narrow wins, the one against the SBT team came minutes from time, Mohun Bagan struggled to live up to their potential. They were dominating all right but poor marksmanship scotched hopes of comprehensive victories.

East Bengal, on the other hand, were making all the right moves in the run-up to the final. They beat qualifiers Jorba Durga 3-1 —Dipendu Biswas and Basudeb Mondal making capital of Bhaichung's prompts and Raman scoring the other goal. They were on song in the next round, demolishing Vasco 5-0, Raman and Rennedi netting a brace and Chapman one. But when it came to delivering the knock-out punch, they faltered.

A word about the refereeing. Not all

the complaints against the supervisors were genuine but in both the East Bengal-Churchill semi final and the final, referee Inayatullah Khan made several errors in judgement. He was often not close to the action and ignoted players' off-the-ball joustings. Khan's lax control was in sharp contrast to his effort in the first Philips National League when he was adjudged the best of the lot.

The script unfolded on expected lines till the final—everyone wants a Mohun Bagan-East Bengal clash after they, armed with equal dollops of cash from Vijay Mallya, defeated all the top guns to Calcutta. No Calcutta teams, unlike last year, cut into each others' path earlier than the semi-final and this ensured good turnouts when the action, on the homestretch, shifted to West Bengal. Somebody had to lose in the end and given Mohun Bagan's roster, they were, it can be said, deserving winners.

PHOTOGRAPHS ASHOKE CHAKRABORTY



day in the life of

Meet the hockey Olympian who represented India during its heyday, of the Fifties

BY PAYOSHNI MITRA

ESHAV DATT: it's a name that harks back to the golden era of Indian hockey—the Fifties and the Sixties. Today, he's a satisfied man. He is still remarkably fit, and, in his own words, 'mobile'. But it is only when he wishes to play tennis that he feels his age and is unable to do so. The reason: he's had had a cataract operation recently.

Despite this setback, the 71-year-old retired Datt leads a fairly active life in Calcutta. Presently, he is engaged in household chores like "shopping and things like that" because his wife is at present in England. All three of his children are away from home as well.

Datt is a patron of the Bengal Hockey Association and a member of the Saturday Club and the Calcutta Cricket and Football Club. He was once the president of both these clubs. He was also closely connected with the tea trade for several years and was a former chairman of the Calcutta Tea Traders Association.

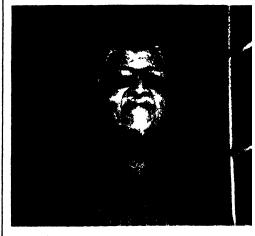
Born and brought up in Lahore, Datt graduated from the Government College of Lahore under Punjab University before the Partition in 1947. He came from a sporting family. All his four brothers were active sportsmen. The eldest was a state-level basketballer. The second brother was a hockey player but after he was injured, he became a

a clippings file, highlighting

state-level table tennis player. The third brother encouraged Keshav to take up hockey.

Keshav tried the game. Soon, he was playing for his college. He had the unforgettable experience, while in college, to be awarded 'Colours' for his excellent performances in hockey and athletics. The ecstasy was brief.

Agony followed soon after when the country was partitioned. The Datt



Keshav Dutt is a sprightly 71

family was uprooted. They began to lead a 'gypsy-like' life. Keshav Datt's eldest brother, who was working in the Customs at Karachi, was given an offer by his superiors, to move over to Bombay. His brother took the option. Keshav also followed him to Bombay. In retrospect, it seemed like a blessing in disguise.

In 1948, Keshav Datt was selected



to play for Maharashtra in the Nationals. He impressed the selectors and was selected to play for India under the leadership of his idol, the legendary Dhyan Chand, in the Goodwill Tour to East Africa. After that, he was selected to play for India in the '48 London Olympics.

Then came the proudest moment in his life: "In 1948, at the Olympics, we won the hockey final when we beat England convincingly 4-0. When we were awarded the gold medals and our national flag was hoisted, with the national anthem being sung in the background, our joy and pride knew ne bounds:" reminisces Datt.

Again, in the 1952 Helsinki
Olympics, where he was the
vice-diptain of the team, India again
with the gold, this time swamping The
Alands, 6-1. In the Melbourne
Olympics, he was gifted the rare

He shows some of the trophies that he has won, in badminton, hockey and tennis

opportunity of leading his side. But the company he was working for refused to give him leave. Burdened with family responsibility, Datt could not resign from the company.

"There was no professionalism in hockey then,"he recalled, "I had to earn money. So I missed the captaincy. If I have to regret anything, I regret this."

Misfortune continued to dog Datt. Though he was selected for the 1960 Rome Olympics he was compelled to withdraw owing to personal reasons.

But even after he quit the game he maintained a close bond with hockey. In the 1972 Munich Olympics, where India won the bronze medal, Keshav Datt was the manager of the team. Ever since former hockey player Nandi

Singh brought him to Calcutta in 1950, Datt has contributed immensely to sports in Bengal. Not only did he represent Bengal in hockey for many years in the Inter-State Championships but had also played a lot for Mohun Bagan.

Datt even excelled in other sports. In the early Fifties, he won the triple crown in the Bengal Badminton Championships. He even defeated the greatest name in Bengal badminton—Manoj Guha. Datt has also played club tennis and golf but his association with badminton was more intense. "I still remember how glad I was when I won my first cup in badminton at the age of 13."

In fact, George Lewis, once regarded as the father of Indian badminton, wanted him to take up the shuttle game seriously. Prakash Nath also tried to influence him in



pursuing a career in badminton. But he decided to concentrate on hockey.

And the game has brought him recognition but sadly, no money. But that did not matter. As he confided, "We played the game and took India to the helm of world hockey because we loved the game and the country. Even though we had Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians in our team, we were one, large happy family."

However, Datt feels that the consistency of the national squad has

been disrupted today, due to the lack of dedication among the players and more importantly, due to the inadequate attention paid by the top management. Even though more money has poured into the game, popularity-wise, the game is on the

"Today incentives are given to

wane.

people used to throng the grounds but today the galleries remain empty even when free entry is announced," Datt says, with a sad shake of his head. But this patriot, who even donated the Olympic gold medals that he won

to the Indian Government (Defence Fund), during the 1960 Chinese aggression, is annoyed to see the gradual decline of values all around.

"Years back if one slipped on the road, ten pairs of hands used to come to one's rescue," he says, "but today if one slips on the road, a car would probably crush him. In today's world, a good word does not cost anything; a little hand that would stop somebody from getting crushed does not cost anything"

These are sad words indeed coming from a former Olympian who belonged to the 'good old days'.

Datt sits in his drawing room, spending his leisure time watching TV. (Inset):He can still balance the ball for quite a while

players and this is good,"he says."But incentives should have some accountability. In the good old days,

Almost...But Not

LEANDER PAES and MAHESH BHUPATHI have reached the semi finals four What goes wrong?

EANDER PAES and Mahesh Bhupathi have featured in four of the last five Grand Slam semi finals. That's a pretty enviable record. No other team, save the Number One duo of Jacco Eltingh and Paul Haarhuis, has matched the Indians' Grand Slam consistency level over the past 12 months. But is this the goal our tennis duo is striving for? Isn't it time Lee and Hesh struck gold at these majors?

On all four occasions, they looked strong and capable enough to win the championship and yet, stumbled in the penultimate round. That itself is a scary fact.

Indian sport has a depressing tradition of throwing up gallant losers. An Anand, a Padukone, a Gavaskar or a Kapil has surfaced from time to time, but more often than not, it's the Vijay Amritrajs who have dominated headlines. Not for winning Wimbledon, but for going down after a heroic battle with Borg or Connors in the quarter finals.

Neither Leander nor Mahesh is in the Amritraj league, but when the two join forces, they can be world-beaters. A year and a half after their maiden ATP Tour title win, Lee and Hesh have established themselves as the world's third-best team and are considered to be on the threshold of a Grand Slam breakthrough. But, having seen them let four opportunities slip through their fingers, even their most optimistic backers have started casting and Cyr nervous condition. They see sufficient but when the two partners in taking though.

a wary eye on these potential champions. "Will Lee and Hesh, too, be victims of the typically Indian 'gallant loser' syndrome?" they ask.

"When you lose four Grand Slam semi finals, people will talk of a jinx, but it's not bothering us too much," says Leander, "We know we are capable of winning a Slam...it's just a matter of time."

He does acknowledge that they lost a huge opportunity at last month's US Open. Drawn to clash with the Woodies in the semi finals, the Indians progressed smoothly even as other seeded pairs crashed out prematurely. The second-seeded Woodies lost in Round 3, fifth seeds Rick Leach and Ellis Ferreira exited in the first round itself, third seeds Jonas Bjorkman and Patrick Rafter lost in the quarter finals. And with the red-hot Dutch duo out of contention as Eltingh had to leave New York to attend to his wife delivering their first child, the Indians were the highest surviving seeds at the last-four stage.

Up against 15th seeds Sandon Stolle and Cyril Suk, Lee and Hesh made a nervous start in tough, windy conditions, to drop the first set tamely. They seemed to have recovered sufficiently to turn the match around, but when it came to the crunch, both partners were found wanting. They had three set points as Suk slipped to 5-6, 0-40. Rarely under such circumstances have the Indians failed in taking advantage. Not this time, though.

"We should have wrapped up the second set. Then, who knows what would have happened in the decider," observed Leander. In reality, the Aussie-Czech combine of Stolle and Suk went on to capture their first Grand Slam after saving two match-points in the final against Mark Knowles and Daniel Nestor.

In the big league, it's all about grabbing the opportunities that come your way. Lee and Hesh haven't done that so far in the majors, although they have excelled in other Tour meets. They have added four titles this year to the six they lifted in 1997 and, as Leander points out, they are maintaining an 80 per cent win-loss record (36-9 for '98 till the US Open).

They have a fabulous record in tinals as well, losing just once (last year's World Doubles Championship in Hartford) in 11 title-round matches they have figured in. "You see, all we've got to do is make a Grand Slam final...then we won't lose," Leander quipped, half-jokingly. On a more serious vein, the senior partner remarked that statistics reveal nothing much is wrong in the way they are playing. "We don't want to put ourselves under pressure by wondering why we haven't won a Slam yet. As long as we are doing our homework, we are on the right track."

Interestingly, three of their four Grand Slam semi final losses have come against teams which went on to capture the crown—Yevgeny Kafelnikov & Daniel Vacek at last

Quite There

mes in the last five Grand Slams. Somehow they can't cross the last hurdle.



inder Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi at this year's U.S Open. Though they have a fantastic i'x record in doubles, a Slam title has somehow eluded them

year's US Open, Eltingh & Bjorkman at the Australian and Suk-Stolle last month. Some consolation that they are losing to the best team in a particular championship. But then, how can that be acceptable to two men rated very highly even by the best in the business? Listen to what Todd Woodbridge, younger half of the legendary Woodies, has to say about Lee and Hesh.

"Lee and Hesh have certainly got the talent to win the big ones. They just have to keep knocking...if they miss one or two chances, they shouldn't be bothered, just have to keep believing in themselves and keep on trying," Woodbridge said a few months ago. As the co-owner of nine Grand Slam titles, Woodbridge should know. He and Woodforde, too, went through four failed attempts before hitting bull's eye

Well, time is vertainly on Lee-Hesh's side. One is 25, the other 24. They have come out trumps on the big stage in the past—Leander's Olympic bronze and Mahesh's French Open mixed doubles are testimony to their temperament and will-power. There is no reason why they can't strike it rich in tandem, specially when both are so good in doubles.

The only hint of apprehension stems from the fact that there is Indian blood in their veins...

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TENNIS INDEX



HERE Patrick Rafter says he's "never had very much luck at all" with women: America.

PlayleR that live-time champion Pete Sampras predicts will win Wimbledon in the future: Tim Henman.

WHAT former world No. 1 Jim Courier says infects the men's tour: A steroid problem.

WHAT Martina Hingis hates about her boyfriend, Julian Alonso: His newly acquired platinum hair.

HAT 20-year-old rising star Tommy Haas regularly watches for inspiration: A video of Boris Becker winning Wimbledon in 1985.

RECORD of the older sister versus the young sister when sisters have played each other on the WTA Tour since 1975: 20-3 in favour of the older sister.

PERCENT of tennis that all-time great Chris Evert says is mental: 60.

THE only player that Nick Bollettieri says he could compare Anna Kournikova to because of her brilliance at the net: John McEnroe.



NUMBER of accredited journalists covering the U.S.Open in 1971: 71.

TUMBER of accredited journalists covering the U.S.Open in 1996: 994.

PRICE of the least-expensive upper-level ticket at the Arthur Ashe Stadium for the last three days of the 1997 U.S.Open: \$66.

HERE 'Home: The Evonne Goolagong Story,' Goolagong's 1993 autobiography, ranked on Australia's bestseller list: No. 1.

WHAT Pete Sampras says would be his first act if

he were CEO of the ATP Tour: He'd shorten the pro circuit to 9 or 10 months.

MESSAGE that Richard Williams scribbled on a typewriter paper and held up during his daughter Venus' victory over Martina Hingis at the Lipton: "I love my mother-in-law in Saginaw, Mich."

THE only modern player who 1938 Grand Slammer Don Budge says ever asked him to critique his game: John McEnroe.

WHO the poorest performers in any sport are, according to William

Beausay, former president of the Academy of Sports Psychology International: "Loners. Top performers are always well supported."

PLAYER whose poster appears on Screna Williams' wall; Screna Williams.

WHAT all-time great and women's sports pioneer Billie Jean King says was the hardest thing in her life: "Dealing with my sexuality."

A MOUNT New York City is fined, under a 1993 agreement, each time a plane flies over and disrupts a match during the U.S.Open: \$5,000.

MARTINA
NAVRATILOVA'S
record in Grand Slam doubles
finals: 31-5.

NUMBER of the Top 6 most marketable female athletes who are tennis players, according to a study done by 'The Sports Business Daily': (No.3 Venus Williams, No.5 Anna Kournikova and No.6 Martina Hingis).

WHAT Patrick Rafter says he dreams about: "Fighting...hand-to-hand combat."

NUMBER of tennis coaches who should be in jail for sexual abuse of girls on the pro circuit, according to a recently retired female player: "Probably five."

Compiled by Paul Fein

PERSPECTIVE

SAVED FROM THE BRINK OF DEATH

A last-minute cancellation helped Swiss tennis player MARC ROSSET to miss the ill-fated Swissair Flight 111 bound for Geneva. He states his feelings about the matter



was thinking to stay a couple more days to practise at the Open. But it was tough to have any practice here when you are out of the tournament. So my coach and I thought about leaving immediately. But I said, no, let's stay for one more night. We'll fly out tomorrow. I came back to my room at night, switched on the TV and I saw that the airplane had crashed. I had a strange feeling

—when you know that just because you changed your mind, you are still alive.

I called my parents because they would have wondered if I was on the plane or not, just to tell them that I was still in New York. I have a couple of friends who called me to find out if I was still in New York or not.

I feel really sad for the people who were on the plane I have been watching CNN all night long, and they showed the airport in Geneva with all the families waiting, all the friends, and I felt sad for them.

I feel very lucky that I didn't take this flight. Right now it is strange. I think I am also a little bit afraid, because I realise I was pretty close to death.

I hope that it is going to help me to be relaxed, as my career comes to an end, and I am learning not to take the thing too seriously. When you are pretty close, then you realise that life is really very temporary. I am going to enjoy my life, enjoy each and every single day that I am alive.

BLIND SUPPORT



Enthusiastic fans show their support for their teams during a rugby match at the Kelena Jaya stadium during the Commonwealth Games held at Kuala Lumpur

MARGINAL IMPROVEMENT

the end, they came a cropper in both versions.

Even in athletics, the lack of appearance money was responsible for stars like Colin Jackson and Jonathan Edwards of Britain, Donovan Bailey of Canada, Cathy Freeman of Australia and Merlene Ottey missing the Games.

However, none of the star

India performed just about okay in the 1998 Commonwealth Games

BY RUPINDER SINGH, KUALA LUMPUR

EV.ASTLEY COOPER, the man who conceived the idea of using sport as a unifier of the Commonwealth must surely be given as much credit as Baron Perre de Coubertin. Rev Cooper would have been delighted to see a field of 70 countries from Cook Islands to Nauree, Namibia to Sierra Leone being a part of the movement.

For long, the Games were confined to England. But, after 36 years, it moved to the Caribbeans, in Kingston (Jamaica). 68 years after their inception, the Games reached Asia for the first time and one hopes Africa would not be far behind.

As the Games approach a more professional era, there is one problem it will increasingly have to face—the lack of presence of big stars in an amateur Games. 1998, Malaysia was no exception. The Games Federation had hoped to add some new flavour by introducing two popular games—cricket and field hockey.

Cricket failed to attract a team from England and the Indian Board of cricket tried to achieve a balance by sending two teams — one to the Games and one to the Sahara Cup. In

Jaspal Rana (r) and his pertner Ashok Mehta looks but their weapons after winning the gold medebathe men's pair centre fire pistol event



withdrawals could take away the spirit of the Games. These Games,

dubbed the "Friendly Games" and the atmosphere at the Games was definitely carnival-like. Malaysia did an excellent job in organising a first-class Games which received favourable comments from the IOA President Juan Antonio Samaranch and has inspired Malaysia to bid for the 2008 Olympics.



Baljeet Singh (I) duelling for the ball with
Justia Pidcock of England in the fight for the
bronze medal. India, sadly, lost

INDIA'S PERFORMANCE

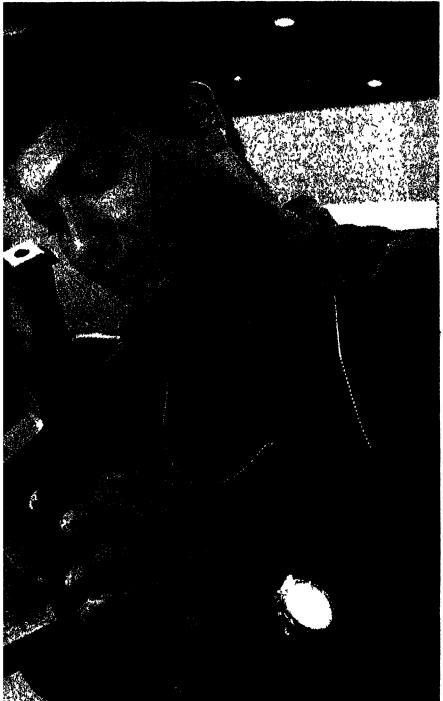
S far as India was concerned, there was marginal improvement in the number of medals. At Victoria in 1994, India had collected six golds, eight silver and seven bronze medals for the 6th place. In Kuala Lumpur India finished 7th overall claiming seven golds, ten silvers and eight bronze medals.

Prior to the Games, the Indian contingent had hoped that the inclusion of cricket and field hockey would give them a much bigger haul of medals. Unfortunately, as the events unfolded, India had to come back without any medals in these events.

In field hockey, there was an improved performance from the Indian men's and women's team. In both cases, India was unfortunate to stumble at the last hurdle. Despite a better overall performance the common shortcoming of physical fitness and an inability to score once again came to the fore. It is about time one looked at developing some permanent solutions to these problems rather than adopt a short term approach.

BADMINTON

BADMINTON was the one game which showed the best results. Prakash Padukone's wards from his Badminton Academy was responsible for a praiseworthy performance, both



from the men and the women. In the team's competition the men upstaged the women, claiming a silver to the women's bronze

19-year-old Allahabad boy Abhin Shyam Gupta was India's unlikely hero as he guided his team to a remarkable 3-2 victory over England in the penultimate round robin match which paved the way for the silver medal Down 1-9 in the third game of the deciding match against Peter Knowles Gupta showed his cool in pulling off a memorable victory at 15-5, 13-15, 15-13

In the individual events, Aparna Popat stole the honours while P Gopi Chand was beaten in the semi-final by the Malaysian Wong Choong Hann 15-1, 15-11, Aparna, on the other hand, went all the way to the final

In the final, Aparna had her chances against Kelly Morgan but finally, she had to be content with the silver medal, losing out 10-13, 5-11 to the top seed from Wales Four medals in all, two of them from the women's side "I am more than satisfied" was how Prakash Padukone put it

SHOOTING

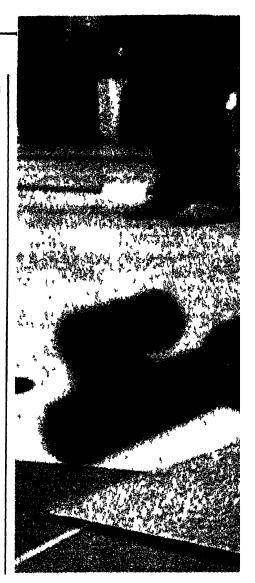
C HOOTING is a discipline in which India has traditionally done well at

Roopa Unnikrishnan takes aim in the women's sport rifle event where she won the gold medal

the Commonwealth Games Kuala Lumpur was no different The exciting part of the results however was the fact that the medals were won by some new faces

Young Manajit Singh partnered the veteran maestro Mansher Singh in the pairs event of the trap team competition. In a somewhat unexpected feat, the trap shooters came up with a fabulous score of 192 out of a possible 200, to clinch the gold This should definitely make up for the disappointment that the reigning champion Mansher had to face in the individual event

Roopa Unnikrishnan had in the past, promised much but had failed to deliver Since shifting to London on a Rhodes scholarship in 1995, Roopa has improved by leaps and bounds in a sport in which she finds time to practise despite her busy educational schedule Her new-found confidence was evident when she shot a final round of 98/100, to overcome a 3 point deficit over Australian C Quigley to win on a countback, both having scored 590 in the sport rifle



A BIG DISAPPOINTMENT

India failed to shine in t

WHAT promised to be a gathering of some of the biggest names in cricket, eventually turned out to be low-key, especially for the Indian side, in the inaugural cricket competition of the Commonwealth Games.

In an otherwise highly, successful year under re-instated skipper Mohammad Azharuddin. the hoopia created by the bickerings bérigéen the BCCI and', the indian Olympic Committee regarding team selection left a bad ite in the mouths of several ernational officials, fans and the

globe-trotting cricketers one feels that it takes more than just a nation's pride to be playing without match and logo fees in the scorching heat. Also living in a Games Village Without room service, telephones and a luxurious ambience is a world away from the splandouses five-star accommodation that our top cricketers enjoy almost throughout the year.

Though the Indian skipper Alay Jadeje said, "It was a different experience having to live with . other athletes, it was interesting to observe the way they do things. White a prise must show a success

India's disappointing showing in Kuala Lumpur, despite the presence of Sachin Tendulkar, the BCCI has tried to play down the whole issue by diverting two players from Kuala Lumpur to Toronto in the hope of saving some grace there

Now that the inevitable has happened and India has failed miserably on both sides of the globe, a sérilor IOA official opined that an India A side would have been a better option. He added that "at least that way no one would have muttered a word and, in the princess, some of our budding falciniscould have pained some



ket competition

That the Indian batsmen had trouble adjusting to the Kuala Lumpur wickets was not surprising. They arrived in the Malaysian capital only 24 hours before their first game.

Sachin Tendulkar came to Malaysia with a reputation to match the legendary Sir Donald Bradman in every maye on the cricket field. The handful of Indians and Sachin supporters in Kuala Lumpur went home totally disgusted as the 'master blaster' managed only a handful of unimpressive runs in his three innings.

India's only bearen of highe was-Debasish Mohanty, who ended on with nine wickets in the three matches. Amay Khurasia impressed with a knock of 83 vs. Canada but was injured in the last group match against Australia.

In India's crucial game against the formidable Australians, Sachin was expected to eventually deliver the goods, at least, going by the law of averages.

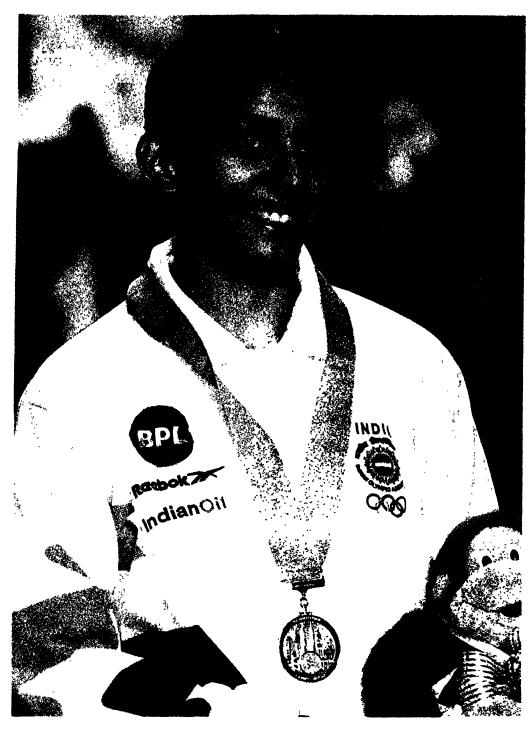
Unfortunately, India's only chance of making a game out of chasing the 256-run target was for Sachin to come out, all guns blazing. But that hope was deshed to pieces as captain Jadeja sent. Tendulkar out to bar at number three. A Damien Fleining curier

put paid to the skipper's hopeful experimentation.

Yer again, the commercialisation factor that surrounds India's biggest cricket star was weefully displayed in his Adidas outfit, even as the other players donned the official Commonwealth Games Indian team outfit, sponsored by Richols.

There was also no evidence in Kuala Lumpur about the new coaching tricks that Brisby Simpson was reported to have taught in the fortnight-long pre-World Cup caths in Chennal that preceded the Games competition.

Anirolal Sircar Kuala Lumpor





Aparna Popat smiles after winning the silver medal in badminton. She lost to Wales' Kelly Morgan

prone event.

Jaspal Rana, however, did the expected. He dominated the team and the individual event in centre fire pistol, to claim his regular two golds. His third medal, a silver in a shoot-off from the air pistol event was an

excellent performance for someone who has recently taken to the event. Thus, Jaspal tallied a total of two golds and two silvers at the Games.

WEIGHTLIFTING

WEIGHTLIFTING is a sport in which the Indian men have done well in the lighter weights at the

Commonwealth Games. This time, it was no different. The Indian lifters came up with three golds, to add to the four won in shooting. India all but swept all the three golds in the 56 kg category when A.Pandian won the overall title and Dharamraj Wilson claimed the gold in the clean and jerk event, only to lose out in the snatch.

The third gold came in the snatch





Pulella Gopichand of India stretches for a return during the quarter final match against John Leung of Wales. He won the match but lost in the semi finals

when Satish Kumar Rai, the 27-year-old bank officer from Bangalore lifted 147.5 kg for a personal best and won a gold medal.

Jitender Kumar provided the silver lining in boxing as he battled his way to the only boxing medal for India—a

fine performance indeed.

The Commonwealth Games provided memories of outstanding performances. One remembers Ato Boldon's fabulous 100m victory. Thorpe success in swimming where the Aussies came up with the lone world record in the relay, Nauru's Marcus Stephen's three golds in weightlifting, the outstanding

Aramugam K.Pandian shows his two gold medals during the awards ceremony. He won them in the 56-kgs category weightlifting event

Kenyan runners in the middle and long distance events and, of course, the success of the 50 km walker of the host country, Sarvanan, which made up for one more memorable edition of the "Friendly Commonwealth Games."

THE FUTURE OF INDIAN BADMINTON IS BRIGHT'

ATUK PUNCH GUNALAN, secretary-general of the Asian Badminton Confederation, and vice-president of the International Badminton Federation, visited Chennai during the Asian Satellite tournament and addressed the Badminton Association of India's executive committee meeting at Bangalore during the Indian Grand Prix tournament.

The former Malaysian ace, who excelled in the Seventies, has his roots in India. His father Panchacharan hailed from Sevarakottai in Ramnad district of Tamil Nadu.

Born in Selangor, Malaysia, Gunalan was the Malaysian national champion for five years. He was an attacking player and got his nickname 'Punch', after a scribe, by the name of Normal Siebel of Strait Times, Kuala Lumpur, headlined his win against the five-time national champion Tan Aik Huang in 1968 as "Aik Huang punched out". While the word Punch remained with Gunalan's name from then on, sadly, Normal had died the same night and could not even see in print what he wrote the next day.

Gunalen also won the 1970 Asian Games strigles and doubles titles at Bangkole the 1970 Edinburgh Commonwealth Games doubles title; the 1975 Christchurch Commonwealth Games singles and doubles stavns. He won the

Says PUNCH GUNALAN, the Vice President of the International Badminton Federation

All-England men's doubles in 1971 and finished runner-up in the 1974 men's singles. After quitting the game he became the national chief coach in Malaysia for many years until 1994. Then he moved into the game's administration at the Asian level and now also holds an office-bearer's post of the International Federation.

Here are excerpts from the interview:

On the merger of two factions that existed in Indian badminton in the recent past.

I'm very glad that Indian badminton is united now. I think they've realised the fact that 'if united you really succeed, divided you fall'. The best of both worlds have joined together. I can definitely see a bright future for Indian badminton.

On your vital role in the unification.

As an IBF vice-president and ABC secretary-general, I was in a position

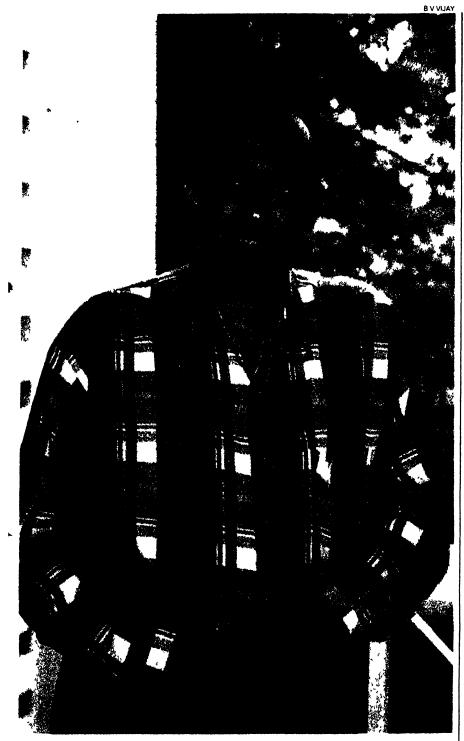
to solve the problem. The situation was not to upset anybody. Being an Indian myself by race I tried to play my part. I think the credit actually should not be given to me alone, but also to Mr Verma and Mr Prakash. The problem was solved because they thought of Indian badminton rather than themselves. This is a very important point to note because if they didn't think of Indian badminton and thought of themselves, then the reconciliation would never have taken place.

Your impression of Indian badminton.

It has gone through a cycle. In most countries, this happens. The Indian cycle went down after Prakash Padukone left the scene and now the cycle is on the way upwards. The important thing now is you must cycle fast to make it go right to the top. This depends on the officials. Of course, it also depends on the support and co-operation from ABC. We will support them.

You cannot live like a frog in a well. You have to come to terms with reality. Because to get sponsorship and to get recognition in any country, you have to be internationally recognised. Cricket is doing very well in India basically because it's a world class sport.

To try and get the Indian wheel



move faster, what we (ABC) have done is to make Verma a member in the Asian executive committee. He is now responsible for the whole of south Asia and is playing a positive role in the development of the game in the region.

Similarly, we've made Prakash an

IBF Council member. So that he knows what international badminton is all about, how things are worked out. Because if you are not knowing what's happening outside, you might be going in a different direction. You should be chasing the guy who is in front of you, not running away from him.

On ABC development programmes.

Prakash is now IBF's area manager for Asia for development purposes. In terms of development, there are various works that ABC is doing. For example, we train referees, court officials and coaches. We definitely need more information about India, what their requirements are and things like that.

On more international tournaments for India.

That's very, very important. You see, the international tournaments must be taken in the right concept. These are not just held to publicise them in the media They must be part and parcel of your development programme. Because, it not only gives exposure for people to see top class badminton but even the host players will get an opportunity to play all the top foreign players. Of course, India is getting tournaments. They have already got the Asian Satellite tournament. The Indian Open was cancelled because of financial difficulties, which we understand.

On India's infrastructure to host international tournaments.

Yes. Chennai has got a nice modern stadium where all the facilities are available. The cost of organising is cheap compared to many countries.

You have competent officials and you have wonderful hospitality. Indian hospitality is well-known all over the world.

The Karnataka Badminton
Association stadium in Bangalore is a
unique one, I must admit. Besides
catering to training and competition,
you have all the in-built facilites there.
It can be used for tournaments, both
local and international, and also for
training purposes. We're hoping to
have the 10-day Asian Youth Training
Centre sometime at the end of this
year in Bangalore.

Aishwarva Lakshmi, Bangalore

BY CHINMOY ROY

N October, the world, for the first time, will witness all the ICC members locked in a battle at a neutral venue like Bangladesh. It seems that a glasnost-like wave is blowing inside the ICC headquarters ever since Jagmohan Dalmiya took over the reins. Mr Dalmiya has unambiguously stated that the globalisation of cricket is at the top of the ICC agenda. It is quite refreshing that the ICC has, at last, come out of an age-old slumber.

Their present aim is to put the game on a firm footing in some 60 countries. The ICC's cricket development committee has drawn up an ambitious development programme. \$15 million a year is the requirement to finance the scheme.

The idea of the Mini-World Cup was conceived with the intention of building up the fund. The ICC felt that the television rights of the tournament would be their financial trump card. Much to their delight, Doordarshan bought the TV rights for a whopping sum. 'Operation Globalisation' has got off to a flying start.

When the desert in the Emirates was transformed into an oasis at Sharjah in 1982, it signalled the unofficial beginning of globalisation. The success of international cricket in Sharjah inspired the administrators to explore the idea of spreading the game in different countries.

After a long gap, Toronto in Canada became the next official venue, in 1996. In terms of both the quality of cricket and rousing public interest, the Sahara Cup at the picturesque Cricket, Skating and Curling Club ground was a resounding success. Then, the Independence Cup was held at Dhaka in 1998. The ICC was so impressed with Bangladesh's improving standards that they awarded the high profile Mini-World

Cup to them.

A continent-wise study will further reveal that the game is spreading, slowly but steadily.

Asia leads the way in spreading the game. Bangladesh has already earned one day international status. The 'Super Eight', a brainchild of Greg Chappell brought Kuala Lumpur into focus in 1996. In the following year, the city hosted the '97 edition of the ICC trophy. That there is development over there is clear by the fact that they have gone from astro turf to natural turf within a year.

Cricket fans may not have forgotten the Padang in Singapore where serious cricket in the form of a one-day international tournament was played there in 1996. Also





A VENGEANCE

The International Cricket Council's dream of spreading the game worldwide is steadily being achieved

developing fast is the Kowloon cricket club ground in Hong Kong. The scene is as encouraging in Europe. Scotland has qualified for the 1999 World Cup. Ireland reached the semi-final of the ICC trophy. We all know that Holland made it to the World Cup proper in 1996. To provide them more exposure, the English Cricket Board (the TCCB) has invited Holland to take part in the English domestic one-day competition from this year.

The Test playing nations are surely playing their part in the development programme. Recently, India 'A' toured Holland and Denmark—countries more famous for their soccer. None has ever heard of an Indian 'A' side touring these countries



The Holland team posing for the camera before the start of the '96 World Cup

before.

Prospects are pretty bright in Africa too. The re-admission of South Africa has given the game a real boost in that region. Zimbabwe earned Test status in 1992. And now there is Kenya, the

THE SPREADING GAME

THE CONTINENT—WISE BREAK-UP OF COUNTRIES PLAYING CRICKET

TEST CRICKET & ICC TROPHY										
	Asia		<u>Europe</u>		Africa	Ns	orth America			
1.	India	1.	England	1.	South Africa	1.	West Indies			
2.	Pakistan	2.	Scotland	2.	Zimbabwe	2.	Canada			
3.	Sri Lanka	3.	Ireland (Northern & Republic of Ireland)	3.	Kenya	3.	U.S.A			
4.	Bangladesh	4.	Denmark	4.	Namibia					
5.	U.A.E.	5.	Israel	5.	East & Central Africa (Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia)					
6.	Malaysia	6.	Holland							

	South America		Central America	A	ustralian Continent & adioining areas
1.	Argentina	1.	Bermuda	1.	Australia
2.	Gibraltar	2.	Papua New Guinea	2.	New Zealand
				3.	Fili

HOW PARTICIPANTS ARE INCREASING IN THE ICC TROPHY

Year	Host Nation	Number of Teams	Type of Pitch
1979	England	15	Natural Turf
1982	England	16	Natural Turf
1986	England	16	Natural Turf
1990	Holland	17	Coconut Mat
1994	Kenya	20	Natural Turf
1997	Malaysia	22	Astro Turi
	~ " " "	 .	

Compiled by Chinmoy Roy

country where the amateur structure is fast changing since their elevation to official one-day status. Had the Caribbean islands played cricket separately, as they did in the Commonwealth Games, the North American region would have been the most represented region. Toronto's success as a venue had been a real spurt for the game in Canada. Now, if only a 'Mission Disneyland' is started by the ICC, there is a good chance for the game to prosper in the United States. Cricket, after all, is a lot like baseball.

7. Singapore

8. Hong Kong

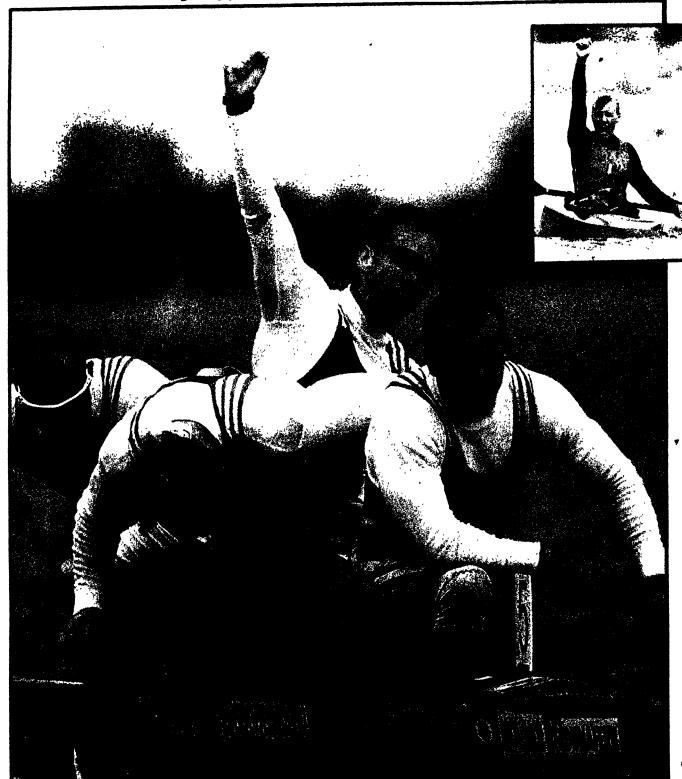
7. Italy

Central and South America are the two most untapped regions for cricket. Bermuda, Papua and New Guinea are the representatives from Central America in the ICC Trophy while Argentina and tiny Gibralter keep the South American flag flying in the same tournament. Cricket, no doubt is in its infancy in all these countries. However, the silver lining lies in the growing number of participants. (See table for confirmation.)

If you add the 22 ICC contestants with the 9 Test-playing nations, you have a respectable number of 31 countries playing competitive cricket. The day is not far when the ICC development committee's dream of putting the game on a firm footing in at least 60 countries will come true.

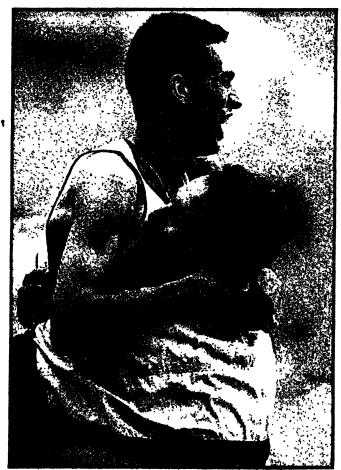


Interesting happenings in the international sports arena





Clockwise from left:
A jubilent Hangerian
team with Casha Huttner
(front) celebrate in their
boat after winning the
gold medal in the men's
C-4 cance 1000m final and
(inset) Italy's Josefa idem
raises her hand after
winning the women's K-1
1000m final of the Cance
World Championships at
Lake Matyer, Hungary •
Thei Premier Chuan
Leekpai runs holding an
'Olympic Council of Asia'
flag while leading a
parade to launch the
Asian Games flag relay in
Bangkok. The 13th Asiad
will begin from December
3 * German Sven Struever
jubilates after winning the
European Golf Masters in
Switzerland * Morocco's
Hicham El Guerrouj is
congratulated by his
coach after he won the
1500m competition of the
Golden League Grand
Prix final in Moscow,
with a timing of 3:32.03
minutes







Two Spanish women kiss
Swiss cyclist Marcus
Zberg for his
victory in the Tour of
Spain over 162 kms
* Korean
Sang-Sun Choi (red) in a
fight with Russian
Nikolay Monow for the
third place in the 63 kg
category at the World
Greco-Roman Wrestling
Championship in
Swaden. The Korean won
the fight







Japanese challenger
Takanori Hatakeyama
(right) exchanges blows
with eight-time defending
champion Choi Yong-See
of South Korea during the
second round of the WBA
super featherweight title
bout in Tekye. Chei lest in
a 6-2 decision and
became the new
champion " The German
Football Association
announced that Berti
Yogts had resigned as the
national team coach in
Frankfurt. On his left is A.
C. Milan striker Oliver
Bieroff

OMETIME ago, 'The Telegraph' newspaper in Calcutta carried a report of how much endorsements some cricketers are earning nowadays:

- a) Sachin Tendulkar: Rs.75-80 lakh from Pepsi.
- b) Saurav Ganguly: Rs.70 lakh from Coke.
- c) Anil Kumble: Rs.30 lakh from Coke.
- d) Rahul Dravid: Rs.25-30 lakh from Pepsi.

Corporate sponsors pay such huge sums to these cricketers because they rightly feel that, if these megastars advertise their products, it will have a quick recall effect with the vast TV-viewing public.

Fame, for these players, arrives through the media. Journalists write about them; TV channels broadcast interviews. You can also see them playing on TV.

Yet the relationship between the media and the cricketers is a complex one.

When a cricketer embarks on a career, desperately keen to make an impression, he craves to be written about in the newspapers and the magazines. He goes out of his way, to be friendly and polite and when a hack asks for an interview, he readily agrees.

If the player does well, his fame increases. More and more pressmen write about him. TV does profiles of him. Magazines do extensive feature articles on him. He is still quite accessible. In a matter of time, companies are at his door, offering sponsorships.

But the attitude of the cricketer soon begins to change towards the media. He becomes haughty. When he is asked for an interview, he says that he has a team meeting to attend. Otherwise, there is always a 'DND' sign hanging on his hotel doorknob.

The bigger he becomes, the more aloof he becomes from the media that made him so well-known in the first place (and has enabled him to earn so many lakhs of rupees in endorsements.) It is a clear case of being ungrateful. Of conveniently forgetting how they became famous



in the first place.

The cricketers, in their defence, say that there are far too many people asking for interviews. "We need to have some privacy," they moan.

Really! Okay, let's give you an example. A couple of seasons ago, a rather well-known cricketer found himself out of the Indian team, for non-cricketing reasons. His career was on the knife-edge, heading towards oblivion.

His earlier aloof attitude towards the media changed overnight. He greeted journalists on the dance floor at five-star discotheques, a big smile on his face and asked them, "Arre bhai, how come you guys are not writing about me. Come, have a drink!"



Such courtesy, such friendliness. The usual line of "I need my privacy" was conveniently forgotten.

The writers did a puff piece. The cricketer slowly began to rebuild his reputation. Now he is in the thick of things. But as one of the reporters said, with a cynical shake of his head, "He is back to being standoffish once again. When I asked him for an interview, he said that he had an important dinner appointment to go to. Which was basically bullshit."

It can rankle scribes that when they assist in building up a higher profile for the players, they still have to encounter this surly, 'I don't care a damn about you' attitude.

On the other hand, it doesn't help that a lot of us journalists have a frantic, obsequious look about us when we ask for interviews. This sort of servile behaviour can awaken a player's latent arrogance.

If the player is a superstar, then the pressman who wants an interview is not even talking to him directly. You have to deal with the agent. This specimen mulls over your request, scratches his chin with his forefinger, yawns noisily and says, in a condescending tone, "He is so busy. He just doesn't have any time."

The scribe implores the agent to 'Please, please arrange an interview, Sir.' (A knighthood is conferred very easily here.) The agent will then ask as to which newspaper or magazine the writer represents, enquires frankly, 'what's the circulation like,' and then, he might or might not, forward the proposal. It all depends on his mood.

If a player is a celebrity, he could even ask for payment to do the interview. Contrary to what we think, there is still a crying need for more money despite all the millions that they are earning. (An aside: maybe we should start asking them for remuneration when they are embarking on their careers and are in need of a few write-ups.)

In their defence, the players say that they have a short career, of ten or twelve years at the maximum; they have to pull in as much of the moolah as they can.

One would think that it you are earning in several lakhs every year, you are already earning more than crores of your countrymen, over several generations.

But in the fiercely rapacious consumerist culture that we live in, where everybody is in the 'grab as much as I can' mould, this negative view of bottomless greed (Harshad Mehta style!) increasingly sounds as if it belongs to another century. It is definitely not a philosophy to mouth on the eve of the millenium. ("The twentieth century is mine. I am peaking!" chortles Al Pacino as the Devil in 'The Devil's Advocate').

One thing's quite clear: The bat is mightier than the pen!

Shevlin Sebastian



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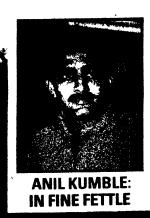
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COOL DUDE!

That's Rahul Dravid for you. Unflappable both on and off the field

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SPIN DOCTOR

Anil Kumble has taken over 200 wickets in both versions of the game

26

THE BLACK PANTHER ROARS AGAIN

Chima Okerie is still one of the best footballers playing in the country PHOTOGRAPHS BVVIAV





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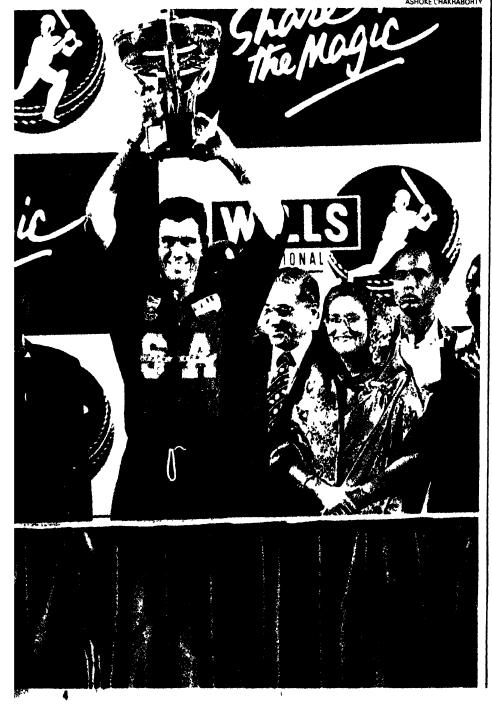
TATA TEA SUPER DIVISION LEAGUE

Editor: Mansur Alı Khan Pataudı

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COVER PHOTOGRAPHS OF RAHUL DRAVID AND ANIL KUMBLE ARE BY B.V.VIJAY

A FANTASTIC TOURNAMENT



The success of the Wills International Cup has put Bangladesh firmly on the international cricket map

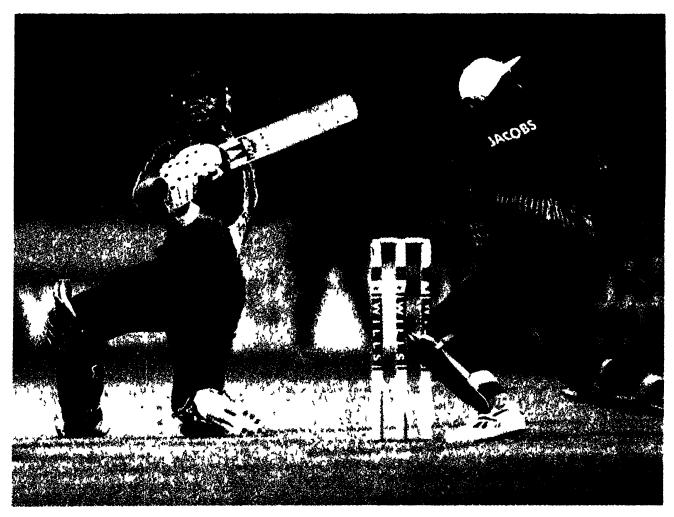
BY RAKESH SHARMA, DHAKA

N Dhaka, ICC President
Jagmohan Dalmiya reiterated
that 'the Gospel of cricket should
be to spread'. To generate funds
towards this intent, a contest amongst
the nine-Test playing nations was
conceived and the Wills International
Cup given shape.

There were many who mocked the idea of a knock-out tournament by stating that cricket might be the casualty with back-to-back matches. Secondly, observers felt that a knock-out format in one-day cricket, is at best, a shoot-out. It may be. But none of the captains complained. In fact, Cronje, Lara, Holliaoke and Sohail, all said, "We are in Dhaka to win three matches".

Lastly, the floods before the tournament had put several question marks about the venue. There was talk of it being shifted because of the possibility of water-borne diseases a distinct danger. To that, the World Health Organisation subsequently handed out a clean chit. Yet, many questioned the fairness of burdening Bangladesh with hosting the event. Surely, some from within Bangladesh were asking questions in a similar vein. However, those who control cricket in Bangladesh thought otherwise.

The president of Bangladesh cricket, Saber Hossain Chowdhury stated in his address to the foreign Press that "because of floods, we needed something to rally round." He went on to explain that, "Cricket, which is the fastest growing sport in Bangladesh, ever since the country South African captain Hansie Cronje holds aloft the Wills International Cup at Dhaka. They defeated West Indies by four wickets in the



Jacques Kallıs of South Africa was in superb form during the tournament and would have definitely won the Man Of The Series Award, if there had been one

lifted the ICC Trophy and secured an entry into the finals of next year's World Cup, has the whole country absorbed around the Wills International Cup "

There can be no denying that Dhaka was agog with excitement over the tournament and, except for the first match, all the other seven days of play saw full houses with a large spillover on the days that India and Pakistan played

Indian and Pakistan cricketers are well-known names in Dhaka and elsewhere in Bangladesh and large crowds thronged the official hotel to have a brief glimpse of the cricketers. This was an everyday occurence. The few who could get access to the hotel lobby milled around the players, especially the Indians and Pakistanis,

for autographs and photographs with them

I asked Ajay Jadeja, "Don't you think your privacy is invaded at times?" His reply was a candid, "They are the ones who have given us this stature" He added "I have got used to it"

Lord Curzon may have partitioned Bengal in 1905. Yet on both sides of the border, enthusiasm for sport, bordering on passion, remains an uniquely Bengali characteristic Divisions leading to the transformation into nation-states, cannot undermine the intrinsic homogeneity and character of a people that have a common language and heritage. The passion for cricket is the same in Dhaka as in Calcutta. And it was in ample view throughout the Wills International Cup here.

THE Wills International Cup got off to a start with a

cracker-of-a-match with New Zealand beating Zimbabwe off the last ball. The match itself was dominated by performances by the rival captains. That set, in fact, the pattern of play for the tournament, particularly, for the first three matches.

Zimbabwe skipper, Campbell got the first century of the tournament and though the Kiwi captain failed to reach his by getting out in the nineties, his side won with a late cameo by Chris Harris

Adam Holliaoke repaired a crumbling England innings with a knock of 83, full of character but Cullinan wrested the advantage with an essay in cricketing poetry and to see his skipper then ram home the advantage for a win by South Africa

While Stephen Fleming failed for New Zealand in the third game, Arjuna Ranatunga held the Sri Lankan innings together with his, by now, customary calm in adversity

The ton by Sachin Tendulkar against Australia reflected the brilliance of an experienced campaigner Sachin continued to dictate the script with a 4-38 to deny any chance to Australia He was the most outstanding Man of the Match

Philo Wallace carved out the Pakistan attack in the fifth match and Arthurton finished the contest with his Man of the Match, 4-31

Jacques Kallis' 113 weighed out the Sri Lankans from contention quite apart from the rain that fell constantly while they batted

The Bangladesh cricket president Saber Chowdhury went at length to explain that they had planned that West Indian Philo Wallace on his way to a savage 103 in the final is he the new star for

the West Indies?

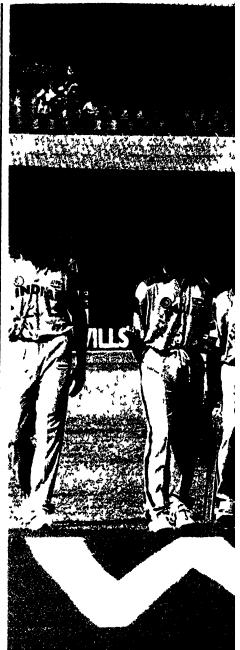
rain should not hamper the end-stages of the tournament He said "We had kept a rest day on the 27th as a contingency, because rain, in fact, was expected on the 24th or the 25th and this had been done on the basis of the weather records of Dhaka in the past "He added, 'We had not expected rain in Dhaka after the

27th Yet the possibility of a bowl out an idea that clearly needs to be refined as in soccer penalties or hockey penalty-strokes mercifully never took place

West Indies' overall performance, in the second semi-final, was far better than India's with Lara Arthurton, Chanderpaul and Wallace all amongst the runs while, for the Indians, only Sauray and Robin and Sachin with the

PHOTOGRAPHS AFF

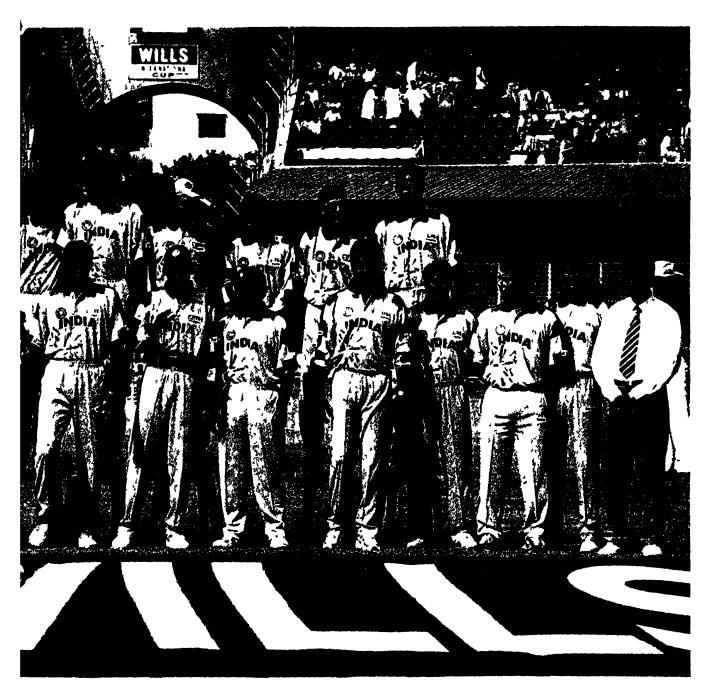




ball shone in an otherwise drab display

The final between West Indies and South Africa may not have been the thriller that everybody envisaged But when the situation came to a crunch, however, the South African skipper, Hansie Cronje held firm and made the difference That allowed South Africa to lift their second title after the gold medal win in the Commonwealth Games at Kuala Lumpur in less than two months

Jacques Kallıs' 5-30 that earned him the Man of the Final award, came



The Indians disappointed yet again when they lost in the semi finals to the West Indies. And we are back to our familiar losing ways once egein

after his superlative 113 that had enabled South Africa to the Final. Though there was inexplicably no award for the Man of the Series, the **Bangladesh Sports Journalists** Association very rightly adjudged Jacques Kallis as the player for that honour. Though Sachin and Philo Wallace also were contenders for that award, Kallıs ran away the clear winner as the 'Player of the Tournament' with his performance in 1 to how much of the estimated \$15

the semi final and the Final that helped South Africa lift the Wills International Cup Trophy.

Of the Taka 3.3 million that the BCB spent, Saber Chowdhury pointed out that "the bulk of it is in infrastructure, like floodlights, etc." and added that "it would last us, at least, for ten years." What is more important, however, is that the tournament will raise the profile of cricket in Bangladesh by several notches.

Saber Chowdhury, the Bangladesh Cricket Board President, was asked as

million raised from the tournament by the ICC will go back to developing cricket in Bangladesh He felt, that now "we have a strong claim over a fair share "

Yet, surely, one of the biggest gains for Bangladesh, while cricket continues to grow by leaps and bounds, is that Dhaka, by staging the tournament, involving nine Test playing nations, has become an international centre for cricket This will do more for the development of Bangladesh cricket in the long term than perhaps any other factor.

COOLDU





There's no denying the fact that I in the limited version. Obviously, that I'm good for only one version

C O V E R S T O R Y

DE!

Essentially that's RAHUL DRAVID for you; unflappable both on and off the field

INTERVIEWED BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI



ve done much better in Tests than cause of this people tend to form an opinion the game

AHUL DRAVID is a technically sound, copybook-style cricketer who likes to play his shots on the rise. The Indore-born, Bangalore-based Rahul, who has a penchant for the straight drive, has now established himself as a player of the highest class, and is a permanent fixture in the Indian team. Rahul's father Sharad Dravid played cricket while his brother Vijay also does. His uncle represented the Holkars in the National championship. Rahul found a person in none other than Gundappa Vishwanath to hone his technique and concentration, while Roger Binny and Brijesh Patel have also helped polish his batting after former BCCI coach Keki Tarapore provided him the initial guidance. Though Rahul is consistent in both versions of the game —his Test average is 53.08 (1,805 runs from 23 Tests) and his strike rate in limited-overs internationals reads 64.34 (1637 runs from 55 innings, averaging 32.09)—somehow he has been labelled 'not up to the mark and needs to improvise' by the pundits. In an exclusive interview in Bangalore, Rahul Dravid spoke about this and other issues concerning his cricket.

You are often referred to as the Mr. Reliable/Mr. Dependable in the Indian team. All Indian fans feel that as long as you are at the crease, India does have a chance. Does this put extra pressure on you?

No, not really. Though I don't put any extra pressure on myself as such because of these name tags, I mean, if

you look at the Indian team I'm just one of so many great batsmen which include Sachin Tendulkar,
Azharuddin, Saurav Ganguly and Sidhu. I think that I'm still one of the younger members of this batting line-up, and if there's pressure on anyone, it might be on Sachin actually. Because he is considered one of our match-winners. I don't think there's any pressure on me, and I just

to me to prove that I can really do it. I know that I have to make a few corrections, and adapt and work hard on my game which is what I'm doing.

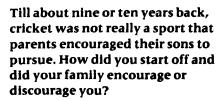
In one-day cricket which is all about improvisation, you seem to take a while to settle down, and even after that many feel that you are not aggressive enough. What do you have to say about this?

situations which really make you a good cricketer. Also in our one-day team we've some very good players, like Sachin, Azhar, Saurav, Robin and Ajay. Maybe my performance has not matched up to theirs. But I still think that I can achieve a lot of success in one-day cricket and I hope to be able to prove that in the future.

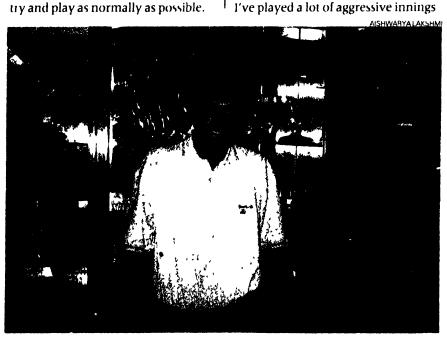
You are supposedly the-best Indian fielder in the forward short - leg position and have brought about some incredible dismissals from this position. It's really a dangerous position to field in. Were you afraid to field in this position initially, and do you do any special practice for this because your reflexes have to be real sharp?

I used to do this for Karnataka when I first started. Being the junior - most member of a side you normally get put into the forward short - leg position (laughs). That's what normally happens. So I was doing it for

Karnataka for a couple of years early in my career and I think that's where I picked up the skill. I'm not really scared of standing there. You have to accept the fact that when you play cricket it's a hard ball game and there are times when you are going to get hurt. Obviously I put in a little bit of extra practice in close-in catching, taking a few short; sharp catches on and off. It's also a question of developing a little bit of strength in your legs and that's what I do.



My parents have been very encouraging and supportive of my cricket. They never forced me to play cricket or forced me to do any particular thing. They saw that I had an interest in cricket and they never discouraged me. Nor did they put any additional pressure on me that I must do this or do that. They just let me develop as I went along. And I always



With the gruelling cricketing schedule that he follows, it is very difficult to catch Rahul Dravid at home these days

Not long ago, in fact, just maybe a couple of seasons or so ago, you were considered to be the ideal cricketer for both versions of the game. But of late, everyone, including the selectors, think that you are more fit for the longer version of the game. What do you think?

I think this has come about because my Test record has been definitely better than my one-day record. You know, there's no denying the fact that I have done much better in Tests than in the limited version. Obviously, because of this people tend to form an opinion that I'm only good for one version of the game.

But I think I also have had some success in one-day cricket as well in a lot of matches, in my short career. I feel that I can put to the forms, but it's up

and I've improvised when required. Maybe there have been cases where I've not been aggressive enough. And that's something I'm working on... improving that facet of my game and practising quite hard. Hopefully with experience and after a few more games it should come through.

The tag that you are not good for the one-day version has come because you have entered the crease at a difficult time in most of the one-dayers you have played. Has it put more pressure on you?

No, not at all. I mean you've to accept the fact that you will be in difficult situations. You cannot always play cricket when your team is in a good situation. That's not a challenge. I think it's how you perform in difficult loved playing cricket and I just kept playing it and was lucky enough to make a career out of it.

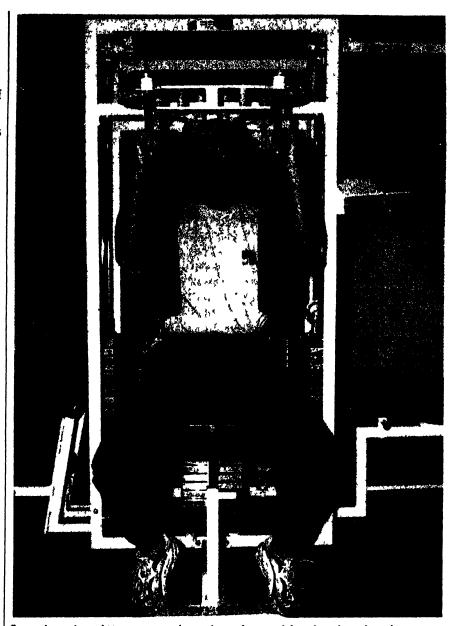
I started off while I was studying in St Joseph's Boys High School We had a good junior team which won most of the tournaments and I began playing for them There were regular practices in school and that's where I started enjoying the game From there I got into the State Under-15 side and then got into the system at the K S C A 1 played a lot of junior level cricket before graduating to the Ranji Trophy etc I used to play a little bit of hockey and football in school, just to be with my friends, and just because it was a season but cricket was always my first love and I always wanted to become a cricketer

Tell us something about your formative years—cricket in school, college etc. and who was the major influence?

As I said, I got my initial encouragement at the St Joseph's Boys High School Mr Keki Tarapore was my coach in my formative years. He was the man who taught me the basics and guided me. That was a very big benefit in the early years. Then I joined St Joseph's College of Commerce which had a rich sporting tradition. That is how I gradually got into the system at K S C A.

Cricketers these days get lucrative jobs even when they are in the midst of their careers. Where are you employed and what does your duties entail?

I'm deputy general manager in the marketing division of the India Cements Limited Actually at the moment with so much of cricket around I haven't really been able to do much of marketing for the company But at the moment mainly my job is to play for the company which has a good, strong cricket team in Chennai I play a lot of league and outstation tournaments for them, and try and promote the company's name wherever I can In fact, India Cements have been great employers to me, providing a lot of encouragement



Exercising and weight training are an integral part of every cricketer's regimen these days, and Rahul Dravid is no exception

They re very good to me

Having made a name in cricket you are marketing a company's name too.

Yeah, I think that's what tends to happen If I do well a lot of credit must, and deservedly so also goes to the company as well

Have you appeared in any ads of India Cements?

No, not yet (laughs)

Like international tennis, cricket also seems to be dictated by TV

channels. They dictate the venues, teams, and even the times of tournaments. Is there too much of commercialisation?

Not really I think you have to strike a balance between commercialisation and the game. In the end you need a bit of commercialisation because to run a sport like cricket, and to make it as professional as possible, you need money coming in You need television and you need sponsors. I mean you ve got to strike the right balance. I agree that the game should not be played for television alone. But I think you've got to keep the interests of that

media in mind Because in the end, that helps promote the game and brings in more money which helps bring in more cricketers, and helps in the development of youth programmes

Cricketers in India these days are big role models. Even though you are one of the most easily recognisable faces in the Indian team, you do not do too many commercials. Is this out of choice? (Laughs). I do quite a few People complain that I've been doing a lot of commercials But I just do what I've been offered I'm a little choosy about what I do, and what I don't I think at the moment I've been able to strike a right balance, not spending too much time on commercials It's just that I spend a few days in a year for these commercials I enjoy doing that, as it not only helps me financially, but also in my personal development

aspiring cricketers. A lot of young guys even go through the practice regimen that you endorse in the Pepsi ad. Do you think that the cricketers should go out of their way to be ideal role models? Yeah, I think as cricketers and public figures we have a responsibility to be role models Since the media glare is on us and we know that a lot of children are looking up to us, and so we have a responsibility. That doesn t mean we've got to change as a person

I think we should try and be what we are naturally I think people tend to accept if we are our own self instead of trying to act and be somebody else That's the best role model one can be to anyone But having said that, we cannot be blamed for everything that goes wrong I feel the parents are the best role models for the kids today Nobody can take their place

Unlike the previous decade, cricketers in India now are an enormously wealthy lot. A lot of the public view cr cketers as 12

having a get-rich-quick mantra. These days even if an Indian cricketer has a short career, he makes much more money than his former contemporaries. Does this too-much-money-too-soon phenomenon affect the competitiveness of the players? I don't think so I agree there's more money in the sport than when the earlier generation was playing the sport But that's true of everything in life I'm sure that the earlier generation had more money than their previous generation I mean, it's just a cycle I'm sure that the future generations who play cricket after us will have much more money than us All of us cricketers realise that we can only make money and we can only succeed in the sport if we do well all the time And to do well we ve to put in that much amount of hard work and we've to be professionals

All of us welcome the fact that there is more money in the sport today, which is a very good sign Because most of us have short careers A career in cricket, or any sport is very short I think most cricketers sacrifice their lives playing the game. Once we finish playing cricket we wouldn t have learnt any other skills to really survive in the outside world. Considering this short career stuff it's important that there should be money in sport, and I don't think that our competitiveness ever gets affected In fact I think in a way it might even enhance the competitiveness

Does money inspire you to perform better?



PHOTOGRAPHS BV VIJAY

You've got to have certain goals and achievements in mile of you follow somebody else's expectations you might be person individually knows what standards he must set a

I don't think money inspires you to perform better But money helps I'm sure if there was no money in sport, then people would divert their attention to something else to make two ends meet But since there is lot of money, most of the guys can focus full attention on cricket A couple of years back the Bangalore brigade was regarded as the new saviours of Indian cricket. They supposedly took over from the Mumbai stranglehold on Indian cricket. Now that has changed. What are the reasons?

This question of Bangalore brigade or Mumbai domination does tend to upset a lot of us cricketers. I don't think none of us while playing for India like to be referred to as the Bangalore brigade. Because when we play for India we play as Indians. It's like even though we might come from a particular place we are representing India at that particular point of time.

It's just happened as coincidence and has nothing to do with any sort of domination or any pride in the fact. It's nice that we're all playing together. But I personally do get upset when people try and make city-dominated or state-dominated remarks. Because we never think that way. When we play for Karnataka we have that pride. We try and win the Ranji Trophy and beat any other state. When we are playing for India, I don't need to compete with Mumbai. I'm competing with whatever, the West Indies or South Africa. I think it's a wrong notion that people have that we tend to group together or that we stay together.

Do you think that the Indian cricket fans expect too much from you. Or did you get bogged down by the expectations of the selectors, your captain and the fans?

Expectations are going to be part of our career, and we've got to face it all the time. The most important thing I've learnt over the years is that you've got to live up to your own expectations and standards, that you set for yourself. You cannot match

I'm sure a person individually knows what standards he must set and try and achieve them, and keep improving his standards. That's the rule I follow and so it doesn't put any additional pressure on me.

Like Srinath, Kumble, Prasad and Joshi all of whom are from Bangalore, you also stay away from controversies and all of you do not court the media. Is this self restraint or just a part of the South Indian psyche?

I don't think this only applies to the four of us from Bangalore. If you have observed, most Indian cricketers do avoid controversies and are pretty well behaved both on and off the field.

I think the image of Indian cricket is pretty clean thanks to players of all the states. Because we're contracted there are a lot of media restrictions. We're not supposed to talk to the media when we are on tour, or when we're playing cricket. Because of this we tend not to really mix too much with the media.

Your hobbies?

I like reading and listening to music and going out with friends. I'm quite a voracious reader and lay my hand on all kinds of books/magazines.

Normally at any particular point of time I always have a book or a magazine in hand and I just find that relaxes me more than watching television. As far as listening to music is concerned, I've nothing in particular. I listen to slow English rock like Sting or Phil Collins and Chris de

for long periods of time and not being in Bangalore much. I've got used to this sort of lifestyle. I mean, you do tend to miss your family and home sometimes. But you've got to accept the fact that if you want to play cricket at the international level or at the highest level, which I want to, then you've got to make a few sacrifices. You cannot have everything your way. These are sacrifices I'm willing to make to achieve success at the highest level.

Even though you still have quite a few years of cricket left in you, have you contemplated on life after cricket?

I've not really put my mind to it as I still think I have a few years of cricket ahead of me and want to concentrate totally on it. Hopefully, after I finish my cricket, I might still have the job, or maybe I will do something cricket-related. But you never know what the future holds for you.

Your cool temperament is regarded as ideal captaincy material. Have you ever thought about it?

I've never aspired to become a captain of any particular team. I've other goals and ambitions. Becoming a captain has never been my ambition. I mean, if it comes along then that's great. But I really don't think so. At the moment you know Azhar is doing such a fantastic job. And then we've people like Ajay, Sachin and Anil along the line. And Saurav as well. So captaincy is a long way and it's not at all important to me.

What exactly is your role in the Save Tiger project for which you advertise?

We only lend our names for this project and are not involved too much into it. We've done that video promotion wherein we just try to make people aware that the forests needs to be conserved and the habitat protected. I love wild life and I love going into the forests. It's like a hobby which we are trying to help do something about.

and work hard towards improving yourself to reach them. setting a standard either too high or too low. I'm sure a kry and achieve them, and keep improving his standards

anyone else's expectations and standards.

You've got to have certain goals and achievements in mind, and work hard towards improving yourself to reach them. If you follow somebody else's expectations you might be setting a standard, either too high or too low.

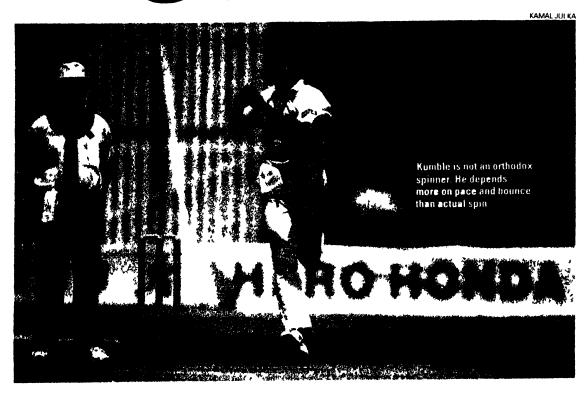
Burgli.

Do you miss staying away from home for long periods of time, now that the schedules are so crowded?

Cricket is a way of life, and now I've got so used to being away from home

S P O T L I G H T

SPIN



DOGTOR

ANIL KUMBLE in just over eight years has taken over 200 international wickets in both versions of the game. Batsmen still find him difficult to read, and he is often India's match-winner

OR a tall man with a lithe physique, and who has just completed 28 summers on October 17, Anil Kumble has a tremendous cricketing record as a legbreak googly bowler. The tall and unassuming Bangalore lad ---who has just earned his 200th Test wicket against Zimbabwe a few days after a similar accomplishment in the shorter version of the game in which he is the first one to do so—has underlined the fact that he is undoubtedly India's most effective strike bowler.

Now he has 204 wickets from 47 Tests at an average of 28.09 and 202 scalps in 148 limited overs internationals at an even more economical 27.09. (Figures at the end of Zimbabwe tour). Add to this his 105 wickets in 17 matches in the 95 English County season for Northamptonshire; 179 wickets in a mere 30 Ranji Trophy matches; 22 wickets in eight Duleep Trophy matches; and 13 wickets in a single Irani Trophy tie for the Rest of India at his favourite ground Ferozeshah Kotla which earned him a recall to the national team 16 months after his debut series. Kumble has never looked back and in all has scalped 700 odd wickets and you have to believe it, all this in a span of eight-nine years!

Whoever saw him in the Eighties can still recall the teenybopper Kumble, flashing a 'no parking' sign to one of his scooter-owning uncles who obstructed their street cricket in Jayanagar. This was much before his days with Young Cricketers in the Karnataka State Cricket Association league from where his talent sprouted. Parents, Krishnaswamy and Saroja, and brother Dinesh, who advised him to take up spin bowling when he used to bowl medium pacers, have always been Kumble's greatest influence. The ever-eager-to-learn Kumble has gone a long way, statistically-speaking, past the 200-wicket mark in international cricket.

Anil Kumble is always cool and coffected. You'll never catch him ruffled, but batsmen are often caught on the wrong foot by his bowling





Very much pleased on reaching a coveted mark in both forms of the game, Kumble, who made his Test debut alongside Narendra Hirwani at Manchester in 1990 a couple of months after playing in limited overs cricket in the Australasia Cup at Sharjah, reacted modestly: "I think it gives a sense of satisfaction. Although it's a personal milestone, I believe it's thanks to the team effort, since cricket is a team game."

Yeah, but how does one feel after having achieved this tremendous record?

"Yeah, looking back, having played eight to nine years of first-class cricket it gives me a lot of satisfaction about the fact that I've been consistent throughout. I think consistency is what really matters." But not long ago critics were yelling that the unorthodox Indian spinner was not a big turner of the ball and was thus

When the going gets tough, Kumble gets going. Many a time he has been India's match-winner

ineffective. Now his stupendous record, no doubt, has shut their mouths.

Kumble believes that one need not have to spin the ball much to get a wicket. "I've always said that I don't spin the ball much. I think to get a wicket you need to just spin those three-four inches off the bat's width to get an edge. That's all I believe in. At the end of the day what really matters is the wickets and how they help the team, when you have achieved it and how many matches you have won," noted an astute Kumble.

Kumble is very much aware of the eventual bottomline and is clear in his thoughts. "Ultimately the bottomline is how many matches you have won for the country. That's the most important thing. I don't really like to

prove a point to anybody else, but to myself. I know my limitations, capabilities and strengths. As long as I am performing to the best of my abilities and I'm giving 100 per cent to the team, that's all that matters to me."

A studious boy until he finished his engineering graduation Kumble is no different cricketing-wise too. Skipper Mohammed Azharuddin has observed thus about his match-winner and his strike bowler: "Kumble is a hard working and sincere cricketer, which has given his bowling more variety". Kumble's well concealed googly and flippers along with his genuine medium-pace faster balls are spelling trouble to the batsmen all round the world.

From wearing metal-rimmed spectacles (which he prefers only at home nowadays) since entering the big league, Kumble has changed to contact lenses. But



cricketing-wise, what difference has he found in himself?

Explained a soft-spoken Kumble 'I think cricketing-wise there has been a lot of changes The experience gained having played so much of cricket in the last 8-9 years and also the stint in Northamptonshire has given me a lot of education and I've learnt a lot of things Everyday we learn and probably the most important thing is the way we analyse the game and how we look at the game We become more positive day in and day out having played so much cricket I think we generally become more positive and look at the brighter side of things, rather than looking at the failures We need to obviously learn from the failures and also look ahead for more successful matches "

Kumble believes that learning is a never-ending process and he was quick to rectify the mistakes That's

Anil Kumble with parents Saroja and Krishnaswamy The Arjuna Award that Kumble is holding is much cherished by his family

the secret behind his tag of a 'match-winner' 'I mean every day we bowl on different wickets in different situations and in different conditions and learn a lot. So everyday we need to learn. I think the best thing would be to grasp quickly. I mean the sooner we learn, the sooner we rectify our mistakes and don to repeat it often, the better it is for my self and also for the team," said Kumble.

But it was not all rosy on the big stage for Kumble during the last 6-7 years. He was "rested" once from the national side in 1997, missing the tour of Sri Lanka and the Sahara Cup and was then. How did he cope up with the pressures of bouncing back?

"I've always believed and had faith in my abilities. I knew my limitations too I just wanted to work harder at my weaknesses and also build up, get more stronger mentally and also work on my physical fitness and also a bit on my bowling I think that probably was responsible in overcoming a couple of failures I have had in the recent past That's about it I always believed in my abilities and just wanted to give my 100 per cent for my state during that time It just happened that last year was very fruitful for me not only with Karnataka matches but also with other first-class matches That enabled me to regain confidence "

Kumble has not set himself any target though his mentor and another unorthodox leg spinner Bhagwat Chandrashekar's Test mark is just 38 wickets away He just wants to take things as they come

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

TITLE: WILLS SPORT CRICKET

BOOK

AUTHOR: KISHORE BHIMANI PUBLISHER: ITC LIMITED

PAGES: 100 PRICE: Rs.395

RINTED on four-colour environment—friendly biodegradable paper, the Wills Sport Cricket Book is an important memorabilia for cricket fans. It was released by the Indian cricket team (which is incidentally sponsored by Wills) on the eve of their departure for Dhaka for the mini

World Cup.

The book divided into various sections, is slickly produced and has many high quality photographs. It recreates the game's magical moments and is not just a chronicle of the World Cup history. This multi-purpose book has pages for notes, after each section. So it can be used as a cricket diary.

The opening sections of the book dwell on a brief but racy narrative on how difficult it was to arrange sponsors for the first two World Cups.

Kapil Dev (left) and Angshuman Gaekwad (extreme right) hold sloft the Wills Sport



The book details every match of successive World Cups interspersed with fascinating off-field stories abou the Kerry Packer imbroglio, the advent of day-night matches, with technicolour clothing, white balls and the clandestine battle for telecast rights.

This part of the book concludes witl the romance of tiny Sri Lanka annexing the Wills World Cup 1996. Copious statistics are provided by Rav Kant Srivastava. Jagmohan Dalmiya, the president of the ICC has written a thoughtful foreward.

However, there is more to the book than just being a chronicle of World Cup facts and records. It recalls the intriguing incidents, astounding anecdotes and captures the ambience of the arenas, the strategies of the skippers and the scintillating display of the players.

The most fascinating chapter is entitled 'Incredible Individuals', which lists and gives biographical sketches. The greats listed are Vivian Richards, Clive Lloyd and Courtney Walsh of the West Indies, Wasım Akram and Javed Miandad of Pakistan, Ian Botham of England, Alan Border, Shane Warne and Craig McDermott of Australia, Sachin Tendulkar and Kapil Dev of India, Sanath Jayasuriya and Arjuna Ranatunga of Sri Lanka and Allan Donald, to mention a few.

Another interesting chapter is on World Cup venues. It is dealt with under the heading 'Amazing Arenas.' This chapter provides astute insights into the changing face of cricket. The transition from the initial atmosphere of the magnificence of a poetically idyllic English county game to the glamour and glitz of marketing in floodlit stadia.

The last section gives a preview of the forthcoming World Cup '99 in England. The largest TV audience for the game in its history, the media blitzkrieg, the prize money, the Super-Six format, the space-station like media centres, coupled with a picnic like atmosphere are all well delineated.

Novy Kapadia



THE MASTER BLADE

When Sachin scores a century, India

tends to win most of the time

Date	Opponent	Venue	Runs Scored	Result
9.9.94	Australia	Colombo	110	India Won by 31 runs
28.10.94	New Zealand	Baroda	115	India Won by 7 Wickets
11.11.94	West Indies	Jaipur	105	India Won by 5 runs
9.4.95	Sri Lanka	Sharjah	112*	India Won by 8 Wickets
18.2.96	Kenya	Cuttack	127*	India Won by 7 Wickets
2.3.96	Sri Lanka	Delhi	137	Sri Lanka Won by 6 Wickets
5.4.96	Pakistan	Singapore	100	Pakistan Won by 8 Wickets
15.4.96	Pakistan	Sharjah	118	India Won by 28 runs
28.8.96	Sri Lanka	Colombo	110	Sri Lanka Won by 9 Wickets
14.12.96	South Africa	Mumbai	114	India Won by 74 runs
9.2.97	Zimbabwe	Benoni	104	India Won by 6 Wickets
14.5.97	New Zealand	Bangalore	117	India Won bŷ 8 Wickets
7.4.98	Australia	Kanpur	100	India Won by 6 Wickets
22.4.98	Australia	Sharjah	143	India lost by 25 runs but reached the final.
24.4.98	Australia	Sharjah	134	India Won by 6 Wickets
31.5.98	Kenya	Calcutta	100*	India Won by 9 Wickets
7.7.98	Sri Lanka	Colombo	128	India Won by 6 runs
26.9.98	Zimbahwe	Bulawayo	127*	India Won by 8 Wickers
28.10.98	 Australia 	Dhaka	141	India Won by 44 runs

TOTAL NO OF CENTURIES	INDIA WON	LOST	WINNING PERCENTAGE
19	15	4	78.94

SATPAL SINGH

Meet the former Asian Games gold medallist wrestler

BY NOVY KAPADIA

QUESTION for the quiz books. Name the Indian sportsperson who earned more than Sunil Gavaskar or Kapil Dev during their heydays in the 1970s and early 1980s?

A: Grappler Satpal.

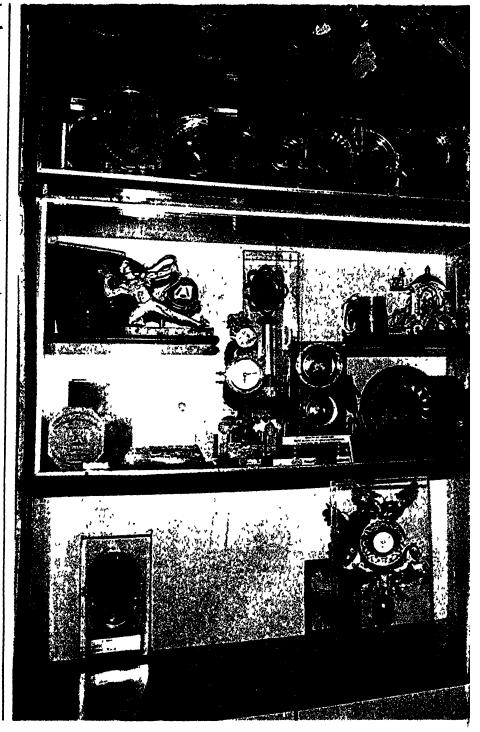
In the days before satellite television, he earned a lakh of rupees or more from wrestling in local tournaments. Such was the strength and stamina of this giant of a man that in one day he won 21 bouts at Muzzafarnagar in U.P.—a record of sorts. Now this genial giant is tackling a new job with zest and enthusiasm.

He is, at present, the deputy director of education, looking after sports in the Delhi Government The successful grappler has become the successful bureaucrat belying the adage that sportspersons are not successful in administration. His life story is unusual and makes for fascinating reading.

The loss of a bicycle led the legendary Muhammed Ali to take up boxing while Satpal took to wrestling because he was bullied by better-built classmates. As a child, he was unhappy at school, because the class bullies always taunted and teased him.

His mother narrated this to his father Chowdhury Hukam Singh. Like many villagers in rural North India, Hukam Singh often grappled as a form of recreation. The 'akhara' was like the local club or adda for the villagers of Bawana.

To develop his son's body and



confidence, Chowdhury Hukam Singh, like so many others, took him to the 'akhara.' Months of exercising, simple living and a nutritious diet enabled Satpal to develop into a muscular young lad. The village elders noted that Satpal had a natural aptitude for grappling. Then came the historic step. His father took him to Guru Hanuman's 'akhara'.

Recalling his initial months at Guru Hanuman's legendary 'akhara', Satpal says, "I was lonely, missed my family and often cried in the night." However senior grapplers like Sudesh Kumar befriended him and made him feel at home. He took to this sport like a duck to water and success followed.

He was selected for Delhi schools for the National School Games for the 46 kilograms category as a Class six student from Birla school. At his first major meet, he got a gold medal. This was the start of his glittering career and the rest, as they say, is history.

In Indian wrestling, Satpal is a legend. He represented India 28 times and got silver medals in the 1974 Tehran and 1978 Bangkok Asiad and of course the gold medal at the 1982 Delhi Asiad. In the world championships at Tehran in 1973,he came fourth

There was a gold medal in the Asian championships at Jalandhar in 1978 and silver medals in the 1974, 1978 and 1982 Commonwealth Games. He was 16 times national champion and won the coveted Bharat Kesri title 15 times. These are just some of his remarkable exploits.

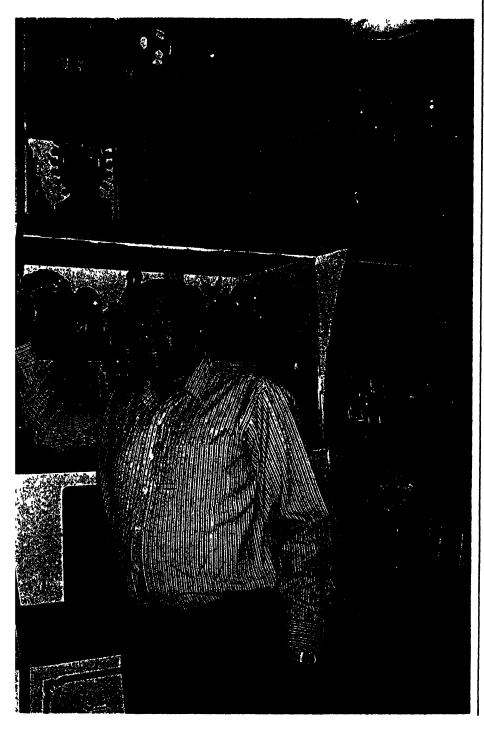
However despite winning so many laurels, Satpal remains a discontented man. He says, "I must have won about 3000 bouts in my life but my ambition was a medal in the Olympics or World Championships but fate decided otherwise.

"My best hope was in the 1980 Moscow Olympics but an eye injury spoilt my chances and I finished sixth."

Recalling the incident at Moscow, Satpal said that in a close fight with a wrestler from Czechoslovakia, "my opponent's elbow and knee struck me above my right eye. I was badly injured and required 16 stitches. The skills of the doctors at Moscow saved my eye."

During the peak of his career, Satpal had the tunnel vision for success. His lifestyle was spartan and he was indefatigable in his workouts. Satpal recalls his regime at Guru Hanuman's 'akhara', which included a 10-15 kms run in the morning, 5,000 'baithaks' and 5,000 'dhands', followed by rope climbing, learning grappling holds and training on the mat. He even played football, basketball and handball for stamina.

His diet was purely vegetarian. He drank five kilograms of milk in the morning and another five kilograms in the evening. He would also take 250 grams of ghee along with half a kilogram of almonds daily along with



seasonal fruits and about a dozen glasses of either 'anar' or 'mausambhi' julce. This was his basic diet besides 'rotis' and vegetables

Satpal believes that it was this diet and a disciplined lifestyle which enabled him to work hard and fully concentrate on his job as a sports bureauciat

Old habits die hard and the 42-year-old Satpal still follows a disciplined life style. Despite his high profile status in Delhi, the city of the nouveau riche and conspicuous consumerism, Satpal shuns the night life.

Lights are out by 9.30 p.m. He wakes up, in rain or heat or cold at 4.30 a.m. and is off to his special 'akhara' (mud-pit for wrestling) at the Chattarsal Stadium, Model Town.

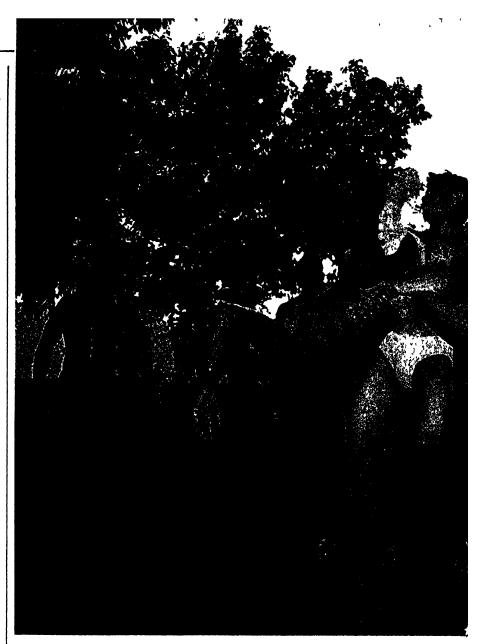
He supervises the training of a large group of 250 wrestlers, including 80 residential grapplers, some of whom, like Nand Kishore, have come from far-off places like Hyderabad. This will give you a measure of Satpal's fame and renown. In the training, he is assisted by four coaches, Ramphal Mann, Yashbir Singh, Pradeep Kumar and Charan Dass.

Till some years ago, Satpal used to train with the young grapplers. Now, however, even Satpal has to bow to the ravages of time. He complains of backache and he has opted for tennis to keep fit. At about 8 a.m. Satpal returns home for breakfast, meeting people and coaches, listening to petitions and to read the newspapers.

His breakfast would make normal people tremble with apprehension. Satpal still has half a dozen glasses of fruit juice, lots of almonds, two kilograms of milk and during the summer months, 'badam thandai'. Then he goes to the office, spends time reading files, getting projects cleared and in meetings with coaches.

Satpal does not have the mind-set of a bureaucrat. Though he is a deputy director of Sports, in the Delhi Government, he is always on the move. As Satpal says, "I keep the coaches on their toes and always in action by my surprise visits."

He also enjoys his visits to the five coaching centres set up in different



Satpal supervising the coaching at Chattrasal Stadium

areas of Delhi. At these centres, he talks to the tramees and tries to uplift their level of enthusiasm.

Unless there is a public function to attend, Satpal reaches home by about 7 p.m. Then he spends time with his two children, 12-year-old daughter Savi Sehawat and 10-year-old son Luv Kumar Schawat. Both his children enjoy swimming and tennis.

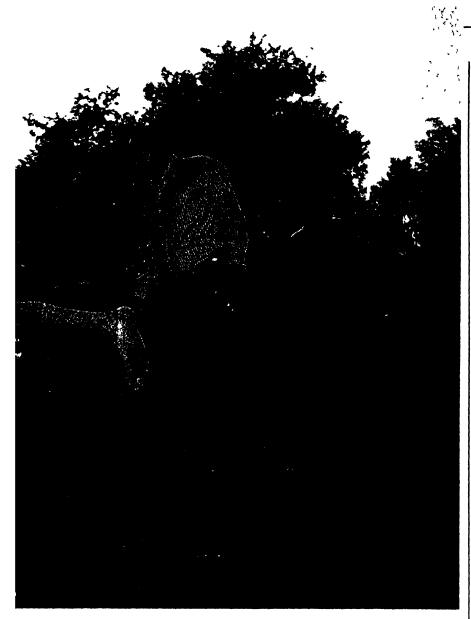
Young Luv Kumar has now started learning the nuances of grappling from his father and is enjoying this ancient sport. Satpal sits and relaxes with his children. Then, he often watches sports programmes on

television. Dinner is at 8.30 p.m. at which Satpal gulps down another one kilogram of milk along with a meal of seasonal vegetables but just one 'chappati'.

"I am still conscious of my weight and so do not eat too many 'rotis'," says a cheerful Satpal.

His wife Veena, says, "Satpal is a good cook and likes dabbling in the kitchen. His favourite food is 'mattar paneer' and mixed vegetables. After dinner, he goes with the children for a thirty-minute walk, then watches some television or reads the newspapers and then it is time for bed."

On the weekends, his favourite relaxation is at the farm house at his ancestral village at Bawana. Here he gossips with old cronies and with his



family members. There are three brothers and two sisters in his closely-knit family. His elder brother Dhara provides him milk daily in the morning. He has been doing that for the past 28 years. Satpal only likes to drink the milk from his village.

As a sports administrator, Satpal takes his job very seriously. He joined as an assistant director in the department of education, in 1984. Till 1988, he was active in wrestling and so did not concentrate on his official career.

But now, for a decade, he has been absorbed in his new role of a sports administrator who is trying to make the citizens of the capital of India more sports-conscious. He became a Deputy Director, Controller of Sports in 1994.

Satpal cites the increase in budgetary allocation for sports as one of his greatest achievements. He says, "Ten years ago our budget was just Rs.80 lakhs. Now, it is Rs.10 crores per annum. With this money, I have improved sports infrastructure. In 1994, there were 24 coaching centres and now there are 118, in Delhi."

Satpal has many ambitious projects lined up. He aims to start a 90-acre sports school, costing about Rs.50 crores, in which students will be trained in 16 sports disciplines.

He says, "It will be a genuine sports school and trainees will be weeded out if they show no improvement within a year. The coaches will also be on a contract basis and will only be retained if they show results."

Some of his other projects are a

Wrestling Institute at Prahladpur, with six mats and an indoor hall which is fully air-conditioned, a multi-purpose sports stadium near his village Bawana and four specialised sports complexes.

Satpal's diligence and inspirational leadership has paid dividends. Five Delhi cadet wrestlers won gold medals in the world cadet championships recently. The India Under-15 years cricket team which won the world title a year ago had five cricketers from Delhi.

Satpal gets money allotted for his projects because of his leadership qualities, persistence and attention to detail in preparing schemes. He has the reputation of a go-getter.

Satpal has lived life to the full and has many fond memories. However, his favourite reminiscence is the way he won the gold medal at the 1982 Delhi Asiad.

He recalls, "There were 16 participants in the heavyweight category in the 1982 Delhi Asian Games. On the way to the final, I defeated opponents from Pakistan, Japan, South Korea and Afghanistan. In the final, I was to meet a formidable grappler from Mongolia. It was a special day and I felt the weight of the nation's expectations were on me. "On that same day, India lost 1-7 to Pakistan in the final of the hockey competition. Before my bout, Kartar Singh lost on points to a grappler from Iran in the final.

"When I strode out for the bout, the spectators cried out, "desh ki naam, desh ki izzat, tere haath mein hain." I was inspired by such sentiments and, despite a nagging knee injury I fought a very clever bout and beat my opponent on technique and never let him touch my injured knee."

Satpal recalled that the erstwhile Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi especially congratulated him for upholding India's pride on a day of reversals in other sports. At this same meet, he was introduced to his future wife, Veena by a former international wrestler, Jagminder. So Asiad '82 has many happy memories for Satpal.

PHOTOGRAPHS MOHAMMAD SHAFIQUE

DRIVEN TO SUCCEED

Hard work and sheer determination enabled IAN HEALY to notch up the maximum number of dismissals by a wicket-keeper in Test cricket



AST year, a young radiographer put an X ray up to a light at a Brisbane hospital For a few minutes there was silence and then he murmured "Dear, oh dear."

The radiographer was shocked that the battered hands belonged to one Ian Healy, wicketkeeper for Australia and now owner of the world record for the most Test dismissals by anyone in his profession

When Healy was called in to see the X rays, the fractures were identified one by one to him and he talked his way through the injuries like a man reflecting on an old family photo album "I remember that one," he would say

Healy pointed out how some of his finger joints will never bend again Ten fractures were spotted. There could have been a few more, but who's counting. Certainly not Healy Some say that this is the price he has to pay for taking over the reigns from Rod Marsh as the most successful gloveman in the history of Test cricket.

Replaced by Western Australia's Adam Gilchrist in the nation's one-day squad, 'Heals', as he is affectionately known by his teammates, guards his place in the Test side with pride. He refuses to accept that a broken finger should ever keep him out of a Test match, so he does want to be X-rayed because he prefers not to know what is wrong

But such is the courage that
Australia seems to take for granted
from its Test match wicketkeepers
For Heals, hard work is second nature
because he bases his game on that
ethos and aligns it to a ruthless
analysis of his performance through
personal diaries which we are told are
fascinating to read. This self-analysis
and a gruelling training regime are the
ingredients Healy has used to become
an integral part of the Australian Test
team—and now a part of history itself

A teacher by trade, Healy is stingy with the marks when he marks his own performances. He has driven himself to greatness by learning from everything which has happened to him.



Once, in a moment of total disgust, he even called for his own sacking.

After a one-day game against India several years ago he wrote: "I played the most gutless shot in my career. I deserved to be dropped for the lack of pride in the Australian cap."

The meticulous side of his nature comes from his father Neville, a retired bank manager who is an efficient, well-organised man. But the tiger in Healy is inherited from his

Healy reacts with joy after catching Wasim Akrem, for his record 350th victim, during the first Test between Australia and Pakistan at Rawelpindi

mother, Raelene, an impressively strong upfront woman who has never mollycoddled her family.

A few years ago in Adelaide, after Healy had been trying to work on his hook shot, he was furious when he mis-timed and skied a hook and threw his wicket away.

That night his mother rang up and

said: "Ian, haven't I always told you about not hooking until you are 50?"

It is the type of harmless tiff that close families have, but Healy hung up on his mum thinking, 'That's just what I need now...the old girl telling me how to hook'.

One of the pivotal incidents in his life came well away from the cricket field. His first posting as a teacher was to a school in the blue collar heartland south of Brisbane.

Healy had replaced a teacher who succumbed to a nervous breakdown trying to control a renegade group of Class 6 students. More than once, Healy was reduced to tears as he told his wife Helen, how the children treated him with no respect as they wrestled in the classroom and refused to do what they were told.

In a 'To Sir With Love' scenario, he taught them nothing else than to file in and out of the class properly. But finally he won them over and was a stronger, more worldly character for the experience.

Now the fear of letting Australia down drives Healy to train as hard as any player. He once said: "If I cost Australia a Test, I don't want anyone to say that I could have trained harder."

It is ironic that he broke the world record in Pakistan, where he started his career very nervously in 1988.

Since watching John MacLean and Rod Marsh as a boy, Healy has always felt it is the keeper's job to stand in the frontline and be the team urger and makes no apologies for taking part in the all-important gamesmanship which occurs in cricket these days.

Like all keepers, Healy is taken for granted by every fan in Australia, most of whom easily know of another wicketkeeper who should be doing the job.

Keepers are rarely heroes, Fans like them but rarely praise them. And that is why any recognition given to Healy touches his heart.

Especially if it is after he has become the man with the most dismissals behind the stumps in the history of the game.

Andy O'Brien, Australia

THE BLACK PANTHER ROARS

That's CHIMA OKERIE for you. Impulsive, forthright and talented, he still has the ability to bulldoze his way past the most difficult of defences



INTERVIEWED BY DHIMAN SARKAR

N a June summer 13 years ago, the then Mohammedan Sporting coach Abdus Sattar had said: "Galcutta is going to have plenty to talk about this player."

The prediction was directed at Sattar's newest acquisition—a 20-something Nigerian powerhouse called Chima Okerie who, after promising his father he will never touch a football again, had come to India to study. For all his football acumen, perhaps even Sattar did not realise that Chima would continue to be talked about today. Not just in Calcutta but the whole of India.

From an inter-university tournament which he played on request to being a striker with a phenomenal strike-rate, Chima has come a long way indeed

In a young man's sport, Chima may be an anachronism but he has survived because he has changed. Time has curtailed the 'Black Panther's pace but Chima hasn't been cowed down by it. Rather, he has worked on his passing and concentrated on improving his off-the-ball game

Today's Chima does not stay up field waiting for a ball to be lobbed into space before bull-dozing past the defence and firing home a cannon-ball. Yes, he still shoots with aplomb with both feet but does not keep himself restricted to the front third. He aids build-ups, creates space and even shores up the defence.

Chima thinks all this is the off-shoot of his European sojourn which began in 1993. He stayed away from India for three-and-a-half years playing in England, Norway and lastly Denmark (he is on contract with Iksat till 2000), before returning for the first National League. Because it was held during the Danish League's winter break, there weren't any clash of commitments and nobody complained. Mohun Bagan then got him released for the whole of next season and this one too, although Chima said he does have to return to



At his leisure he plays chess on his computer

Denmark before the league starts in late November.

His is forced to stay away from his family —wife Cathy and the kids are based in England—for a living. And, so far, it's been a job well done. His being Tata Tea Super Division's highest scorer (13 goals in 12 matches)—Chima has now been the highest scorer a record six times—and the National League's Best Player award is proof of that.

In this free-wheeling interview, Chima talks about himself and about Indian football.

Thirteen years in Indian football is time enough for some introspection, isn't it?

Well, I haven't really looked back like that but since you mentioned it, might as well take a trip. I still find it difficult to believe that what started as a joke suddenly took on a more serious dimension. I mean, I never wanted to be a professional footballer.

Somehow, I still don't accept it as a proper job.

Looking back, I would like to

believe that everything that happened was just a stroke of good fortune from God.

My father made me promise that I would never touch a football after I reached India. For one year, I didn't. But if you look at how my playing career began and if you are someone who believes in destiny —well, you have a story.

Would you want to re-live those years any differently?

I would have liked to be an architect. It's still in my dreams.

But then, why are you still at it while the players you started out with, in 1985, have long since quit?

I don't know. But it's not as if I'm playing because I want to outlast everyone else I am impulsive. I used to do 10,000 skips each day. Suddenly, I didn't feel like it anymore. Haven't done it since. Even as I am giving this interview, I may suddenly want to go to...say, Nigeria. And I will, believe me.

One day, I borrowed money and flew from Calcutta to Delhi and to Mumbai before returning to Calcutta the same night. Just hopped airports.

Don't know why I did it but did it nonetheless. So, one day I might wake up and not want to play football anymore. Till that happens, I will go on.

For someone as impulsive as you, playing this long must have taken some doing.

I knew I could play...didn't really have to work very hard. It is a gift of God and impulsive or not, I haven't been able to wish it away. I think God made me to play football.

How religious are you?

Moreover, financially too players now are better off.

But what has remained constant over the years is the depressing lack of self-belief among Indian footballers. You would have thought that, by now, Indians would have taken notice of their abilities—I have never seen more skilful footballers elsewhere. But performance never reflects potential and I am surprised that the powers-that-be haven't identified the problems, leave alone seeking a remedy.

Have you identified any



He is training to be a fashion designer

I am not a fanatic but, yes, I am religious. I believe in God, in Jesus Christ and I believe he has charted my life's course. I go to church but usually when nobody else does. That way, I feel closer to God than on Sundays.

Any changes in the game here since you began?

The Tata Football Academy (TFA) is one. Their graduates carry themselves well, on and off-the-field. Several academies, I also hear, are on the anvil. And that's good news.

problems?

Indians have a tendency to hold on to the ball too much, which, in turn, reduces mobility. Pedestrian pace, the result of eight to 10 dribblers in each team, is Indian football's biggest problem. Players' skills must complement the team game. That rarely happens here. That's why foreign teams run rings around Indian clubs. Playing at a faster pace is a matter of habit —there's no reason to be unable to do it.

The game needs more dynamism. Younger coaches, in sync with the times could be a solution. I am very pleased with Manoranjan's (Manoranjan Bhattacharya, the East Bengal coach) achievements. The League title has been a just reward for his perseverance. I was also pleased with Peerless' game. We beat them all right in the League but Biswajit Bhattacharjee's coaching impressed me.

Young management-trained personnel too should be roped in to run the clubs. I am surprised nobody exploits the business angle better.

So, it's a one-way road to gloom?

No. I would say, Indian football is at the cross-roads. Changes are being rung in and public interest is still quite high. Now is the time to start new clubs; ensure stiffer competition for the existing ones and channelise more energy into tagping new talents.

Will we see Chima Okerie as a coach after his playing days?

I would like to move on from football once I give up playing. I like new challenges, treading into unknown areas. That appeals more to me than the more assured ways of life. But then, you never know...

How has your game changed over the years?

When I started out, the only thing on my mind was to go and score, alone. I did it okay but I realise now that I contributed so little to the team. Coaches pointed this out after I went to Erigland. They explained that I should be more involved with the team and told me to enjoy the game. It's been that way since.

Has Chima Okerie the person changed?

In more ways than one. Earlier, I would easily get angry on the pitch. Even off the field, my anger would inhibit me, make me wary. What people took for arrogance was actually a lot of worry that I would blow a fuse and create a scene.

Two or three hefty fines (imposed by clubs for what they thought were needless bookings) in England chastened me. When you have a family to look after, you don't mess around. Now it takes a lot to get me really mad. Having lived in different countries has also made me more flexible in my attitudes towards people.

Has marriage helped?

Obviously, Seventy-five per cent of it is due to marriage. I am fulfilled towards that angle. I have a lovely wife and the two best kids in the world.

Staying alone therefore must be difficult for you?



What has remained constant over the years is the depressing lack of self-belief among Indian footballers. You would have thought by now Indians would have taken notice of their abilities—I have never seen such skilful footballers elsewhere



It's a terrible situation to be in. Try as hard as you may to push it out of your mind, sometimes it just doesn't go. There are times when you want to be with your near ones, but nobody's home. At times, I put the TV on only to hear another voice. It's excruciatingly depressing. But then, I have a job to do...

Isn't it contradictory that someone this impulsive stays focussed on football despite all this?

Yes, I guess it is. But I have already

agreed on football as my job—at least as of now. So whatever happens, I've got to present myself to my club. Your whims and wishes don't matter. So what if the period of separation is agonising. There are certain ground realities you can't ignore..

Why did you leave India?

It was getting stale out here and I really wanted to see how good I was. I am satisfied that compared to the best, I am not far off. Had I not gone, I don't know whether I still would be playing.

You were quoted as saying you would never return to India as a

want to now.

Aren't there too many mediocre foreign players here now?

There are, I guess. Some were not players before and not all have gotten good over time. It is because football in India is so static that the emphasis is on strength. Big men may look very clumsy if pace is the corner-stone of your game. In Europe, they are not looking out for big Africans all the time. I think this will continue till the focus in Indian football shifts to a more fluid, off-the-ball style of play.

Are you working on your



Away from his wife and children, he passes his time reading novels

footballer again when you left (in 1993). Why did you change your mind?

The Mohun Bagan president (Swapan Sadhan Bose) was instrumental in changing my mind. He called up and said a National League is being introduced and asked whether I was available during the Danish League's winter break. But Mohun Bagan didn't qualify and I was told to play for East Bengal. Memories came flooding back. I can always say no but don't

biography?

I am through with the first part. I thought I would continue on it during my stay in Calcutta but can't get into the right frame of mind. That, it seems, will only happen when I return home (Devon, England). I hope to finish it by January. It will be called My Odyssey.

How do you relax?

Sleep, play chess on my computer and draw dress designs (Chima is now training to be a fashion designer). I don't watch movies unless I am on a flight.

ALIVING LEGEND

That's MICK DOOHAN for you. He became the 500cc motorcycle World Champion for the fifth consecutive time recently

Right from the start of the season, I wasn't enjoying my racing. But I won the race and decided to hold off for a while. But then I started enjoying myself again."

The win in Australia also prompted him to confirm he would be staying with Honda next year.

"It's been a real up and down season. I thought I had lost the championship, when Simon and that guy, what's his name, Biaggi, and I came together at the first turn at Jarama. Then I got back on top of the points. Then I was sliding down the

Doohan displays the trophy he won at the Australian Grand Prix

ITH a wheelie over the line and a half-lap long wave to the fans that was almost too casual, motorcycle Grand Prix racing's living legend Mick Doohan took another step closer to the top table in the sport's Hall of Fame, by winning the recent Qantas Australian Grand Prix.

The win gave him his fifth consecutive World Championship in the 500cc class—only provisionally, until it is certain that there will be no further protest against Max Biaggi's (Team Kanemoto Mariboro Honda) disqualification from the Catalunyan GP.

Even if there is, however, it is so unlikely to succeed, that Doohan, Honda, sponsors Repsol and more than 51,000 Australians who had flocked to the picturesque Phillip Island circuit started celebrating immediately anyway.

Doohan's last-lap antics were not only out of character, they also allowed second place Simon Crafar (Red Bull Yamaha) to close down the gap from three seconds to less than one over the line.

But with nearest rival Biaggi dropping to eight in Phillip Island, even second place would have been enough for Doohan to take the world title to follow up similar successes in 1994, '95,'96 and '97. After the race, in an expansive mood, Doohan revealed: "I had decided to announce my retirement after the race at Mugello, the fourth of 14 rounds.



Dochan carries the national flag after winning the Australian Grand Prix

road in Czecho, saying some things that I can't repeat, thinking that the title was over again.

"Most years I've won the championship by stringing together some good results in the first seven or ten races. This year we weren't stringing wins together until the last three. Every year seems harder and I guess 1999 will be harder still. It will be a tall order to win a sixth title, but that will be my aim at the start of the next season.

"Who knew if things had gone our way in 1992, I could have been sitting on seven straight world titles, just like Agostini managed.

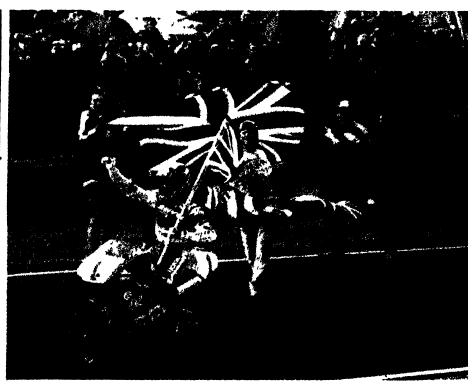
"The doctors wanted to amputate my leg after I broke it in 1992 and it's hard to steer a motorcycle with only one leg. So, once again, I must thank the doctor who fixed me up plus everyone else for their support

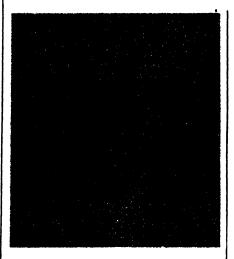
"As Kevin Schwantz once said 'you're full of motivation, then it slowly goes'. I think I'll have more motivation for the next season, if I do a lot of testing during the off season. If I kick back and start enjoying the good life too much, maybe I won't want to go back to work." Doohan says he doesn't like too much attention. He is known for his modesty, loyalty to team colleagues and generosity to rivals.

Doohan showed no signs of succumbing to the pressure of his home grand prix round, a round where the disaster of last year's event —when he crashed on lap 17 after building a seven second lead—weighed heavily on his mind.

"Once I'd got beyond lap 17, which all the journalists were reminding me of, it was pretty much maintenance control, a question of just bringing the bike home," he said after the race.

He explained his last lap wave as a special gesture: "I had a look over my shoulder to see where Simon was so that I could wave to the crowd. It's something special to win the championship at home. There was





pressure as there always is at your home GP. I prefer racing in Europe. But to win a championship in front of Australian crowds is beyond my wildest dreams, and I hope the same thing happens to some other people, because it's just a fantastic feeling."

There is a feeling among motorcycle racing fans that for a champion who has attained so much, the international press has given this sporting hero a very lukewarm reception. Even the hype-ridden. Australian sporting media have also not paid enough respect to his achievements.

He is a world class sportsman who displays his country of origin so proudly. He has an Aussie flag displayed on his helmet and gloves and waves the Aussie flag whenever he wins throughout the world.

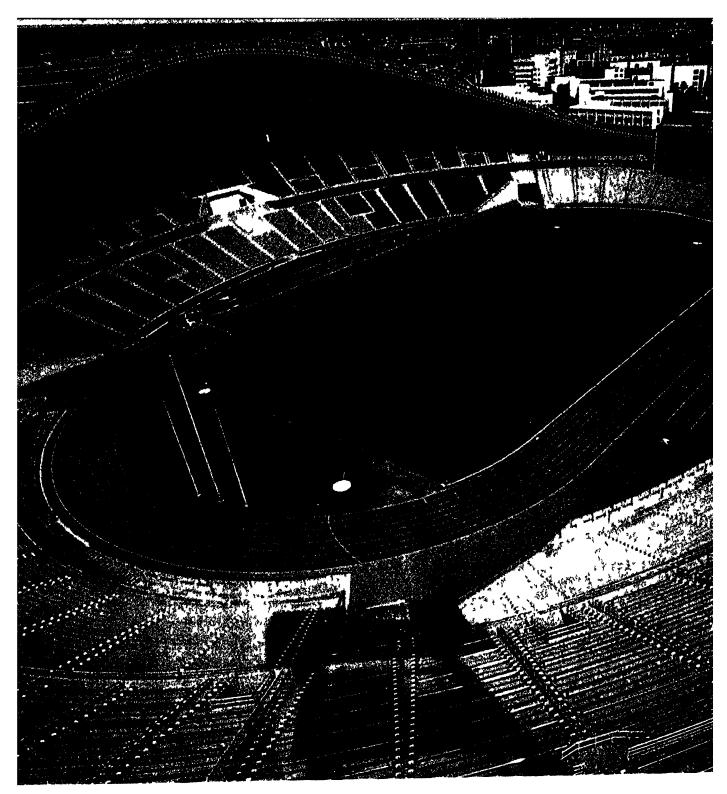
It is not very often that we see so much patriotism displayed in an individual sport. Pat Rafter received so much attention (and deservedly so) when he won his second US Open; he even received a message from the Prime Minister of Australia.

But what of the five time world champion? Zilch. Nothing.

Despite his tremendous success,
Doohan admits he too is on the
receiving end of the famous
Australian disease called 'tall poppy
syndrome'; where once you've made
it to the top, there are plenty of people
seemingly looking for the opportunity
to cut you down. It's something that
the other great rider of modern times
Wayne Gardner endured, and it's
something the five-times world
champion also has to go through.

After all, you don't make it to the top of your profession without a determination and will that mere mortals simply don't possess.

Andy O'Brien, Australia



WHAT TO EXPECT

A preview of the infrastructure of the 13th ASIAN GAMES to be held at Bangkok next month



HOPES OF UNITY

There is talk between FIDE and Garry Kasparov to merge the two World Championships

BY ANIEK PAUL

'N the aftermath of the 33rd World Chess Olympiad, there is mounting speculation that FIDE, the world chess federation, might agree to integrate its world championship with that of the world's strongest player, Garry Kasparov.

Kasparov has refused to play in the PIDE World Championship knock-out tournament to be held in Las Vegas in January '99. His refusal was for the same reason he did not play in Groningen/Lausanne '97-98: his sticking point is his loyalty to 'classical chess'. The knock-outs, in his opinion cannot determine the best player.

There are speculations that FIDE might agree to the good old idea of a re-union match between the FIDE champion and Kasparov. The idea has recently been introduced by Bessel Kok, the Chairman of Eurotel (Czech Republic Telecom Company) who earlier on, was an influential figure in the chess world.

His active role in the management of the Grandmasters' Association (GMA) brought him into the limelight some eight years ago, but ever since he had a disagreement with Kasparov and with the disappearance of the GMA, he has not been actively involved in chess. Yet he is still considered to be a man who can deliver the goods.

The offer from Mr Kok includes the setting up of a body of the famous from the world of both commerce and entertainment who will govern the match, with Kasparov and FIDE also being allotted one member each. The

proposal involves the match being played in the second-half of 1999, between Garry Kasparov as the ... reigning world champion and the winner of FIDE's Las Vegas world championship as the challenger.

It's believed that the Kok group would also be providing all of the organisational expenses for this high-profile match plus the \$3 million prize-money, out of which, \$2million will go to the winner and the rest to the loser. Mr Kok also indicated that he would not be using the proposed match as a vehicle for any personal aspirations in the chess world.

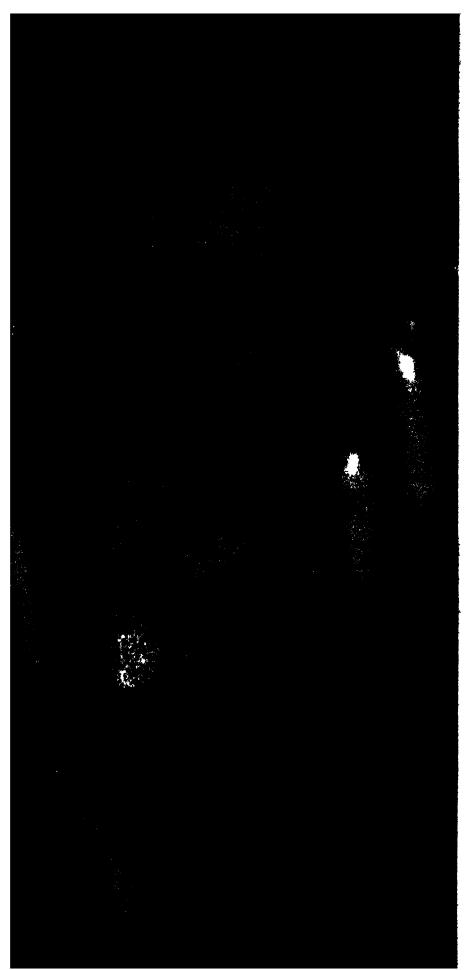
Kasparov seems quite interested. He said, "I believe that the proposal has great merit and I will study all aspects of it as they unfold. I take the defense of my world crown very seriously and would like to play an appropriate challenger as soon as possible. It is no secret that it is three years since my last title defense against Vishy Anand in New York. Everybody knows that we talked for months to Karpov about a defense in 1997, without ever getting him to

"I am, as always, ready and willing to defend my crown against a worthy opponent and I have been ready and eager to play for over a year. If the Bessel Kok-FIDE alternative goes forward positively and depending on who wins in Las Vegas, this could be very good for the challenger, for FIDE, for me and for the game of chess."

It is quite interesting to note that Kasparov typically calls it the 'defense' of his title. This implies that the knockouts to be held in the World Chess Championships at Las Vegas will determine no more than a challenger!

Plans to integrate Kasparov with the FIDE World Championship failed in the past for the simple reason that -Kasparov would not play in a re-unification match unless he was given the rights of the world chempion, which practically means if the match ends in a tie, Kasparov. retains the world title. But will FIDE agree? Kamperov says

Kasparov international chess will benefit if there is a cappinchement



"I think that this has more to do with Kirsan flyumzhinov (the President) than with FIDE. If he continues to pour millions of dollars into the World Championship this year and plans to do so for many years to come, then he

will say 'no'. If he does not intend spending three million per year for years to come, then this is an ideal solution for him as well as for PIDE."

Ilyumzhinov has recently been re-elected the President of FIDE for four years, and according to the latest reports, FIDE has persuaded Anatoly Karpov to agree to the terms and conditions of the knock-out tournament in Las Vegas.

At the other end of the spectrum, Kasparov has had to bury the recently founded World Chess Council (WCC) and the alternative World Championship under its aegis. Anand was invited to participate in it, but refused saying he was bound by his word to FIDE, not to play in any other world championship.

The WCC World Championship started with a match between Kasparov's protege Vladmir Kramnik and Alexey Shirov in July. Shirov won the match and earned the right to challenge Kasparov, but the final between Kasparov and Shirov, scheduled for October, did not take place for want of sponsorship.

Of late, Kasparov has had immense difficulties raising money for his self-styled world championships. FIDE too had difficulties between 1993-6 funding a world championship without Kasparov for want of professional recognition. But since the induction of Ilyumzhinov in '96, millions of dollars have been pumped into chess and Kasparov's inclusion ceased to be a necessity.

His return will possibly mean the end of the knock-out world championships, which proved itself as a more viable alternative to the classical format. But most importantly, Kasparov's inclusion will mean political rivalry to llyumzhinov from within FIDE, which, in all likelihood, the self-styled President, now enjoying a free run, will not willingly invite.

NE of the leisure facilities at a lunar hotel that Hilton International plans to build on the surface of the Moon: 20 to 30 tennis courts.

ON-HUMAN who has his own stadium pass with name and ID photo at the French Open: Roland, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario's Yorkshire terrier.

TENNIS INDEX



HAT Thomas Muster did when he walked past opponent Felix Mantilla during a changeover at the 1998 Italian Open: He took the banana that Mantilla was eating out of his hand and proceeded to eat it himself.

WHAT Venus Williams, who lost in the quarter-finals to Martina Hingis, had earlier predicted, would be her biggest obstacle at the 1998 French Open:

"Speaking French."



REASON club members at the RAF Hilton are infuriated with British Prime Minister Tony Blair: Blair takes three courts but uses only the middle one while keeping the others empty for security reasons.

HAT Nike Chairman
Phil Knight —who has
pledged to curtail child labour
at his factories in China,
Vietnam and Indonesia—
acknowledged the Nike
product has become
synonymous with: "Slave
wages, forced overtime and
arbitrary abuse."

REASON Marcelo Rios calls his trainer, Manuel Astorga, "Big Head": "Because he thinks he knows everything."

HAT the late Karolj Seles, for years a cartoonist in Yugoslavia, used to repeat before he learned to speak English "Love America, love America, free to do anything"

UMBER of times that Chris Evert reached the semi-finals or better in 18 Wimbledon appearances 17

PERSONAGE who bumped worldNo 1 Martina Hingis out of the Presidential Suite she originally reserved at the Intercontinental Hotel in Berlin during the German Open President Bill Clinton

THE cause of most tennis racket wear and tear and the main determinant of the frame's life expectancy Restringing (not continuous hitting)

A GE at which Anna Kournikova last cut her hair 7

HOM Venus Williams named as her favourite player Herself

GROUP of people, besides the players, who are required to run, stretch and do sit-ups before matches at the French Open The ballboys and ballgirls

HAT Michael Chang did after his upset loss to Spain's Francisco Clavet at the 1998 French Open He waited for the ballboys and ballgirls to finish collecting their balls, and he then thanked each one individually for working his match.





NUMBER of other Grand Slam tournaments that the last five French Open men's singles champions have won' 0 PLAYER whom Serena says she "really thinks" she can beat 39-year-old John McEnroe, her childhood idol

ON-lost record of Julian Alonso, a promising 20-year-old Spanish player, since he started romancing Martina Hingis in March 1-10

Compiled by Paul Fein

UNDER THE SCANNER

The ICC has cast doubts about the legitimacy of HARBHAJAN SINGH'S bowling action. The young lad's future seems to be in jeopardy

MURALIDHARAN,
Rajesh Chauhan,
Kumara Dharmasena
and now Harbhajan Singh The list of
off-spinners coming under the
scanner of the International Cricket
Council's (ICC) Match Referees seem
to increase by the day

While three Match Referees
—South Africa's Peter Van Der
Merwe, Sri Lanka's Ranjan Madugalle
and Talat Ali of Pakistan—had cast
doubts over the legitimacy of
Harbhajan's action, the ICC's panel on
illegal deliveries was quick to nail the
18-year-old offie

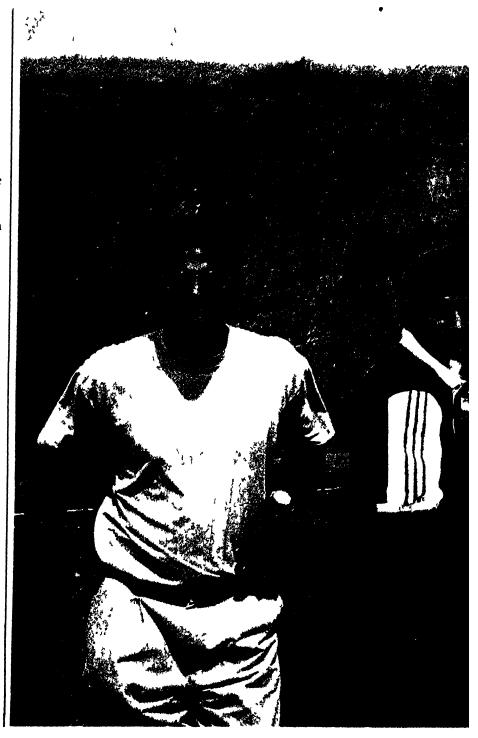
Van der Merwe was Match Referee during his debut Test against Australia in Bangalore while Madugalle had seen him in action against Bangladesh in Mumbai during the Coca Cola tri-series last May It is therefore, evident that both had drawn their conclusions after watching him bowl in just one match

But what is amazing is that none of the umpires have 'called' him during his brief career at the international level. And it is the umpires who are supposed to be the sole judge of deciding whether a bowler is throwing or not

Law 24 2 on Fair Delivery (the arm) reads "For a delivery to be fair, the ball must be bowled, not thrown If either umpire is not entirely satisfied with the absolute fairness of a delivery in this respect, he shall call and signal 'no ball instantly upon delivery

Though ICC president Jagmohan Dalmiya maintains that the Match Referees did consult the umpires, the

Harbhajan Singh (second from left) pictured with Srinath (extreme left), Ajit Agarkar and Debashish Mohanty at the picturesque Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe



role of the men in white coats remains surprising.

The BCCI's consultant Bob
Simpson, who is also on the ICC's
illegal deliveries panel, never cast
doubts over Harbhajan's action
during the team's conditioning camp
in Chennai recently. Rather, the
youngster and the team management

came to know about the episode only when he was ommitted from the Wills International Cup squad. At least, a man of Simpson's stature, who had watched him closely at the nets, should have cautioned him in case he noticed something illegal.

There have also been words of comfort from the Zimbabweans,

against whom Harbhajan played for the last time some time ago. "It's all a matter of opinion, yes, but our guys didn't find anything wrong with his action...Some people have obviously had doubts, but we faced him only recently," says Alistair Campbell.

"He's certainly a lot better than some of the other bowlers on the circuit. Maybe, his action violates the ICC norms for a particular delivery (say, for instance, the straighter delivery, in his case)," adds an international panel umpire, who preferred anonymity.

"There is nothing wrong with his action. If there is any rectification needed...he has to come side on and be a little closer to the wicket," opines Bishan Bedi.

Words of advice have also been forthcoming. Erapalli Prasanna, who had helped Chauhan out of the crisis, has offered full support. Srinivas Venkataraghavan is also at hand if needed.

Says Prasanna: "I've seen Harbhajan Not much appeared to be wrong with him. Maybe what he needs is some finer adjustments. But I have to study his action in slow-motion replay, sometimes even frame by frame, to detect any fault."

Prasanna sounds a note of caution for the Punjab lad, having seen from very close quarters the ignominy and mental torture Chauhan had to undergo. "He has to be mentally tough. After all, it is a stigma of sorts. He should not let snide remarks upset him."

Harbhajan, however, has remained unperturbed by all the controversy. "I'm confident of making a quick comeback as my action is clean. No umpire has ever doubted it, nor obviously have I myself ever had any misgivings," he maintains.

The next few months will be tough for Harbhajan. He will have to go through the corrective measures once the ICC names his guide. He has often bowled with a maturity beyond his years at the international level. Now it will be another process of proving his mettle.

Indranil Majumdar





ERS ON ALIEN SOIL

VER five decades, through years of remarkably inconsistent cricket, the Indian team had earned for themselves the unenviable tag of 'tigers at home, rabbits abroad.'

And just at a time when the Bradmanesque exploits of one Sachin Tendulkar promised to wipe away such an inglorious reputation, That's what India has been in their six decades of Test cricket

BY AMITAVA DASGUPTA

Strang, their other accomplished bowler, was out with injury.

By the Indians' own admission, there was no demon in the pitch. The bowlers did their job, leaving the batsmen a target of 235 in almost 11 hours. And what do we get from our celebrated batsmen? A pathetic, unplanned and unimaginative display lasting all of four hours and 56 overs,



Mohammed Azharuddin's men have done it again. The 61-run humiliation in the one-off Test against Zimbabwe at Harare last month reconfirmed the theory that Indians are, indeed, poor performers on alien soil.

Taking nothing away from Alistair Campbell's team, it has to be said that India had no business losing the Harare Test. In Sachin, Azharudoin, Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid and Navjyot Sidhu, India boasted of a powerful batting line-up.

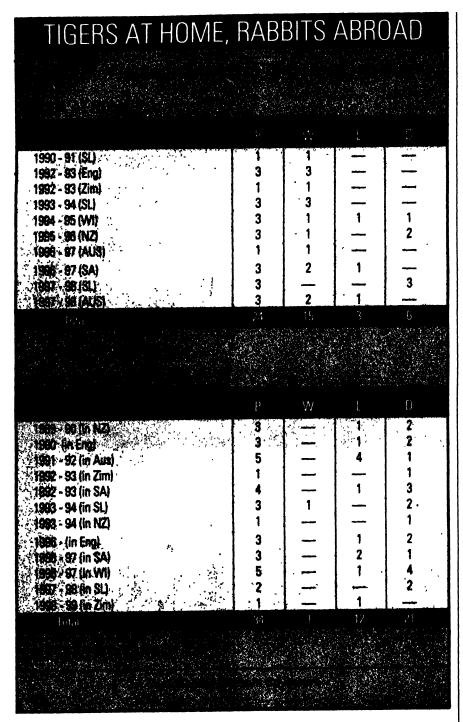
The bowling arsenal had enough firepower, too, with Jawagal Srinath

The victors take it all. The Zimbabwean team after only their second victory in 31 Tests. They defeated India by 61 runs to make this possible.

and Anil Kumble being established matchwinners, and youngsters Ajit Agarkar and Harbhajan Singh providing the back-up. Quite a formidable bunch that, compared to the resources Zimbabwe could muster. Heath Streak, their fast-bowling spearhead, is no Allan Donald for sure. And leg-spinner Paul

gifting Zimbabwe only their second-ever Test victory, with over a day to spare.

Just six months ago, Azhar's men were celebrating a famous series victory over world champions
Australia. True, that was achieved at home, but the degree of domination Sachin & Co. exercised over the redoubtable Shane Warne, led the world to believe that Indian cricket was on the threshold of a majestic era. It was impossible to fathom in March that such a talented and motivated team would come crashing down so



soon —that, too, against a lightweight opposition like Zimbabwe.

Tests abroad have been surrendered by the dozen. One has to look back no more than 19 months to relive the embarrassment of Barbados. Requiring 120 for victory in the third Test on a pitch of variable bounce, India crashed to 81 all out with Vangipuram Laxman and Mr Extras being the only two double-digit

contributors.

Not only would victory at Barbados have been a landmark achievement for India -only the second series victory in the West Indies-Sachin's first stint as captain could also have lasted longer.

Sachin was again at the helm when the Durban Disaster happened two seasons ago. After restricting South Africa to 235. India fell for 100 and

even surpassed themselves by getting dismissed for 66 in the second innings. The Kingsmead pitch was a seamers' paradise for sure, but then, how can an international side total just 166 runs in two completed innings?

Then, of course, there is the 'Summer of 42' which took place at Lord's in 1974. Needing 327 to force England to bat a second time, Ajit Wadekar's XI could muster no more





Henry Olonga jubilates after Zimbabwe won the Test. Olonga claimed six scalps in the Test

than 42 to lose by an innings and 285 runs.

India have also 'managed' to lose after knocking up a 400-plus score in the first innings. This happened in the second Test of the 1977-78 series at Perth. Bishan Bedi's men scored 402 but then failed to defend a 338-run overall lead as Bobby Simpson's team carved out a two-wicket victory.

No less embarrassing was the innings-and-33-run rout against New Zealand in the Wellington Test of the 1975-76 series. 114 was what the Indians had to get, to make the Kiwis

ANALYSIS

bat a second time, but the one-man army Richard Hadlee allowed them no more than 81.

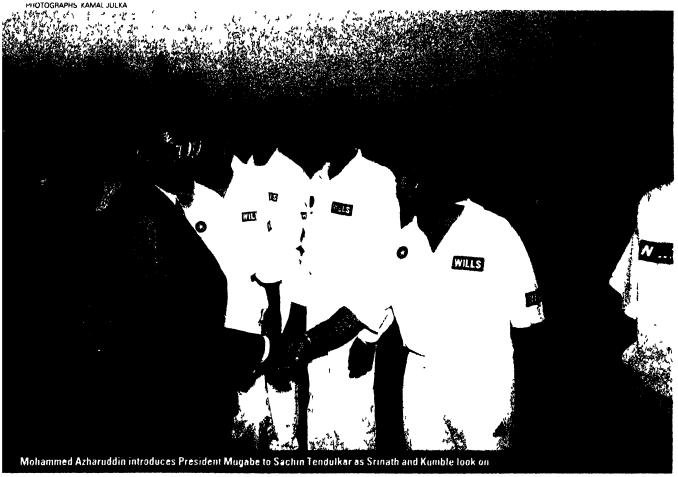
The list is endless. We have, after all, lost as many as 66 of the 150 Tests played abroad so far (compared to 38 defeats in 169 home Tests). And during the current decade, which was ushered in by the cricket Board with Azharuddin's much-publicised 'Team of the Nineties,' we have one victory

home," the itinerary was such that we didn't have enough time to adapt to those conditions."

There is no denying the fact that an abundance of docile, batsmen-friendly pitches in our domestic tournaments nurture a breed of cricketers who develop a false sense of security vis-a-vis their performance level. In seven cases out of 10, these 'over-achievers' get

While we wait for that renaissance to materialise, it'll perhaps be prudent to go deeper into this serious problem that afflicts our No.1 sport.

Technical deficiencies can still be rectified with extra hours at the nets. It's the other 'malady' which hurts Indian teams' winning chances abroad—the lack of mental toughness. When we play on foreign soil, most of our cricketers believe that



and 12 losses in 34 overseas outings as against 15 triumphs and three defeats in 24 home Tests (see accompanying box). Depressing stats for a nation which has been playing Test cricket for the last 66 years.

Pointing a finger at conditional differences has been the pet excuse of most losing captains and managers. The moment Indian cricket teams return home from disastrous tours, the country reverberates with statements like 'wickets we played on were a lot different than the ones at

exposed as soon as they are thrown into the international arena.

Take Vikram Rathore, for example. Season after season, the Punjab opener has been scoring with a Gavaskar-like consistency in domestic cricket, but put him in front of a Donald, a Gough or a McGrath, and you would wish you never saw him bat again!

The maestros have been crying themselves hoarse calling for a modification in the domestic system—not only in the nature of wickets but also, in the basic structure as well.

we can't win. The odd player may not be overcome by such a negative and defeatist attitude, but more often than not, his lone gutsy effort falls well short of what is needed to overcome a united opposition. How else can one explain the Harare debacle? But for Rahul Dravid and, to some extent, Sourav Ganguly, no one else showed the heart to fight it out.

Just as a Bob Simpson and an Andrew Kokinos are essential to prop up the Indian team technically and physically, it's time we sought the services of a psychologist, too.

OF SIXES & EIGHTS

New unofficial innovations in the one-day game might transform it in the next millenium

O for the aerial route in the first fifteen overs
Accumulate one's and two's in the next twenty five And finally, have a slog in the last ten Well, even a kid knows what formula we are talking about Yes, it's the formula that most sides adopt in a one-day international match. The

pattern has become too much of a stereotype

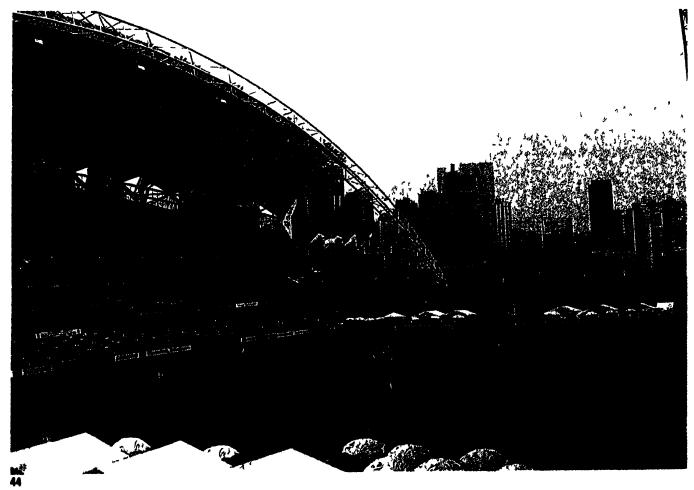
One-day cricket desperately required some changes As usual, Australia, the land of Kerry Packer, the brain behind today's pyjama

The spectacular Hong Kong cricket stadium where the Sixes tournament was held

cricket, were the first to come off the blocks. A game called one-day quarters was tested in 1994. Fifty overs were split into two twenty five over innings for each side. Sadly, the experiment flopped.

Then arrived Greg Chappell He was also concerned about cricket's declining popularity in Australia Greg, therefore, evolved Super Eight, a completely new ball game The laws are truly novel Equally fascinating is the game to the spectators. It takes 112 minutes for a game to finish, which is just ideal for the speed-loving modern era

The first Super Eight game was played at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1996 After having incorporated some rules, the game wears a pretty prosperous look in 1998 India, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Pakistan all battled hard in this year s tournament, played on natural turf for the first time The intensity of the competition revealed



that the cricketers were really enjoying this new game. New Zealand were the eventual winners with a two wicket win over Australia in the final.

Let's take a look at some of its innovative laws: Each team comprises eight cricketers. They can bat a maximum of fourteen overs each. There is a rectangular area marked in white in front of the sightscreen at each end of the wicket. It's known as the 'Max Zone'. Runs are doubled

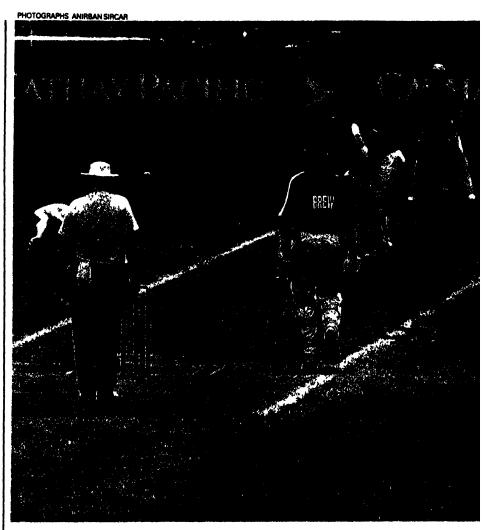
There is a rectangular area marked in white in front of the sightscreen at each end of the wicket. It's known as the 'Max Zone'. Runs are doubled whenever a ball travels through or over or into the 'Max Zone'

whenever a ball travels through or over or into the 'Max Zone'.

There is a funny no-ball rule. The very next ball following a no-ball is a free-hit ball for a batsman. He can only run himself out in that ball. In the first years, a batsman had to retire after having reached 50 or more. Subsequently, that rule has been done away with.

Across the Tasman sea, the cricket craze was diminishing in New Zealand. Like Greg Chappell, Martin Crowe, the ex-stalwart of Kiwi cricket, felt that the demands of a busy lifestyle was one of the major factors behind cricket's dwindling popularity.

In 1995, Martin Crowe devised 'Cricket Max'. At Cornwall Park, Auckland, the first Cricket Max match was played before an expectant crowd. And they loved it. It prompted SKY TV and the New Zealand cricket board to launch a Cricket Max competition amongst the national provinces during the 96-97 season. The competition was a grand success. Later, there was a match between Max Blacks (Kiwis) and English Lions (Pommies). They played three



Rahul Sherma of Hong Kong faces up to lan Hervey of Australia during the '96 Hongkong Sixes

international matches between themselves. And having received an overwhelming response, the Kiwis are planning to hold a Cricket Max World Cup in 1999.

Matches are played mostly in the small rugby grounds, on artificial pitches. Shorter boundaries ensures a flurry of big shots and the 3 1/2 hour extravaganza often turns into a cliff-hanger.

Finally, we have the Hong Kong
Sixes. It started in 1992, and it was designed primarily to promote cricket in East Asia. Kowloon Cricket Club's indoor stadium used to be the old venue. Now, the tournament has shifted to the open-air Hong Kong Stadium in 1996 to accommodate more spectators. This is clear proof that the game is growing in popularity.

The obvious seeing a glim played in the if Kerry Pack the way crick the way crick the way crick the way cricket might unrecognisal that the game is growing in popularity.

Played on a sand-based fibre-glass surface, this six-a-side cricket is extremely popular among the international cricketers. Each side bats for five overs. Everyone, save the wicket-keeper, has to bowl an over. A batsman has to retire when he reaches 31 or more. He can come back, only if his side loses all wickets. A side is bowled out when all six batsmen get out. Here too, due to short boundaries, lots of balls disappear into the stands, much to the delight of the crowd.

The obvious question is this: Are we seeing a glimpse of cricket as it will be played in the next millenjum? Well, if Kerry Packer's night cricket changed the way cricket was played for the next two decades, who knows, if these innovations are adopted officially, cricket might become totally unrecognisable in the next century.

'SHOOTING IS AN INTERESTING SPORT'

says ROOPA UNNIKRISH

HMERME ALD BYRAKEDE GHARDIA KBALATIBMPDE

ROOPA UNNIKRISHNAN is pretty, bright- eyed and has a patrician taste Her interest in music ranges from Mantovani to Mozart and in films from De Niro to Kieslowski. She is a Rhodes scholar, studying Management at Oxford. The Rhodes scholarship is given for academic excellence along with prowess in any one sport. Roopa won the gold for India in the individual Sport Rifle. Prone for Women at the Commonwealth Games held at Kuala Lumpur recently.

Here are excerpts from the interview done at the Games Village

When did you take to shooting as a sport?

I started in 1985 and I was thirteen then Basically, I got started because my father is in the police and he was going to one of those inspection camps where I got to see these guns. There was a police competition and I just sort of thought 'now this is interesting. So I got started, went to the state meet and within a year I was already getting a silver at the Nationals. In three years time. I was in the Indian team.

When did the Rhodes scholarship happen?

The Rhodes scholarship happened three years ago —one of the high poir ts in my life, yes

At t & College I went to, the



Rhodes scholarship was looked upon as the ultimate...

Actually, my father always had this idea. He would tell us there are these opportunities out there. One of the things that he mentioned to me when I was 14 or 15 was that 'you keep doing well at studies and keep shooting, you might be able to go to Oxford' And for that, he said, there was a Rhodes scholarship. So it was

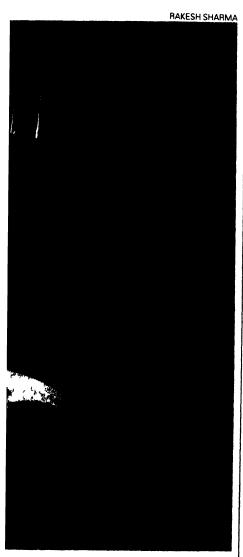
floating somewhere at the back of my mind I don't know if people really appreciate what it takes really because many find it impressive and so don't apply, on the other hand, there are too many people who don't know that it exists

They must be ignorant...

It is strangely a generational thing Because all my father's friends say it is fantastic while some of my friends came and said, 'so how do you spell the thing—Roads.'

What college were you in? I was in Women's Christian College in Chennai. I did my Bachelor's there.

And then this happened? I had my silver medal in the



Commonwealth Games before the Rhodes scholarship four years ago. So I had decided that this had to come by at some point of time. I had decided on a different colour. I didn't want a silver again. So I took the gold this time

What would be the one impulse you think that has led to the gold here?

I think the impulse to do better. That is all I ever thought of. Because it is not a question of setting out to get a gold in the Commonwealth Games. That can be a self-defeating sort of an idea. I said to myself, 'I have to have a much better score than I had been getting.' We were used to losing by a point or two. So the thing to do was to get ten more points as my father would say, 'Don't cry, get ten more points and they can't possibly deny you the top position.' So that is what I did.

For the past three years I have been shooting for both the county and my university. And we had a lot of matches—at least twice a month. And everytime I would see that the more time I spent in thinking about the matches, I saw my performance improving.

In fact, just before I got into the flight to come to Kuala Lumpur I had a little bit of trouble getting my ammunition in because some airlines have a problem carrying it and the person with me turned around to the lady and said, 'This girl will be getting a gold.' I just raised my eyebrows, 'Gosh! Everybody has that confidence in me. Why can't I do it'.

After you won the gold, did you speak to your father?

Oh yes indeed, he was the first person I spoke to. I would love it if I could go to India and just hug my father and mother. But I have to graduate on the fifth of October.

And where is home? Home is in Chennai.

But you hail from Kerala; which part of Kerala are you from?

Cannanore. I am largely a Malayalı. But I have been born and brought up in Chennai.

You said you are graduating on the 5th of October. So what next?

I've got a job in New York. They have been flexible about my joining. So I think I will join after the Asian Games. So I will get back home towards the end of October and practise for the Asian Games. After the Asian Games, I will go on to New York.

What is the job about?

It is to be a Management Consultant with a company called 'Mitchell Madison'.

Would it give you time to participate here?

Actually, during our interview process, I made it very clear to them that shooting was an important part of my whole personality. And they seemed to consider that an advantage which was really good because too many employers focus on just the work. But they were supportive. Three times a week, if I can focus and practise which is what I did throughout my years at Oxford, that is what you need. Sure, the perfect thing would be eight hours every day seven days a week. But the regimen that I have followed will allow me to do well.

Roopa, you say shooting is part of your personality. Would you explain that?

Shooting is not a conventional team sport. You are not sitting there being gregarious. You are actually at the lane. You are concentrating; you are focussing on getting a perfect score. That is what it brings out my personality—the ability to concentrate for long periods of time, not be distracted and try for perfection, I suppose.

Did your father contribute in your taking to shooting in a big way as a sport?

I suppose yes. But I shot because I wanted to. It is an interesting sport; something that is un-conventional. That is what really attracted me to it. But my mother said that when she was pregnant with me, she took part in a State meet and won in Rifle Shooting. She still represents Tamil Nadu state in Pistol shooting. She insists it is her gift and I suppose it is. It all runs in the family.

Shades of the 'Mahabharata'.

(Giggles...laughs and says,) 'Absolutely'.

CAKEWALK

Bangladesh easily defeated Malaysia to win the ACC Trophy at Kathmandu

BY ANIRBAN SIRCAR, KATHMANDU

ANGLADESH easily asserted their supremacy over Asia's cricketing minnows, Malaysia and thus retained the Pepsi ACC Trophy held at Kathmandu, Nepal.

Surprise finalists Malaysia were clearly inspired by an impromptu visit to their camp by none other than the nation's Prince, Tuanku Imran Jafaar, who is also the president of the Malaysian Cricket Association. But

The victorious Bangladesh team posing outside their hotel

that was not enough. The defending ICC Trophy champions easily disposed off the Tamil-dominated Malaysian team by eight wickets with over 28 overs to spare at the picturesque Tribhuvan University Ground at the south-western fringe of Kathmandu city.

Newly crowned skipper Aminul Islam led from the front with both ball and bat and rightly deserved the man-of-the-series award. Bangladesh now qualify to join defending champions Sri Lanka, four-time champions India and Pakistan in the seventh Asia Cup to be held at Dhaka, next year.

The second Pepsi ACC Trophy served as the curtain raiser for



PHOTOGRAPHS ANIRBAN SIRCAR

"We are About Four

says Bangladesh skipper AMINUL ISLAM

NEWLY christened Bangladesh skipper, Aminul Islam, nicknamed 'Bulbul', is no songbird. He is a gutsy fighter with self-effacing mannerisms. The 31-year-old all-rounder recently tied the knot following which he took his wife to Kathmandu. Aminul arrived at the Nepalese capital, with Bangladesh under pressure to qualify for the Asia Cup. The skipper exuded confidence in this interview, just prior to the ACC Trophy final

Aminul has appeared in 21 limited-over internationals scoring 498 runs at a decent.average of 31.12 with 2 fifties. He has also taken 3 wickets. He was adjudged the best fielder of the 1997 ICC Trophy.

How does it feel to be the captain of Bangladesh for the first time?

I am very happy personally and with the new team that I have got. Some of the guys are only 22 years old and very talented. Neither am I nervous at assuming the role of captaincy, nor is this a new job for me, because I have skippered Mohammedan Sporting Club in the Dhaka League for five years now. But, leading the country is a great achievement and honour for me and I will fulfil my duties as far as I can.

How important will it be for Bangladesh to win the ACC Trophy?

The ACC Trophy is a very important tournament for us because of two reasons. Firstly, it gives us the ticket to qualify for the next Asia Cup and secondly because it will be held in our country next year (March 20-April

Years From Beating The Big Guns"

3). So, there is indeed some pressure on us to achieve our goal. I think we have played well, considering the state of the wickets here. But the opening bowlers have been quite erratic at times, otherwise everything else is fine.

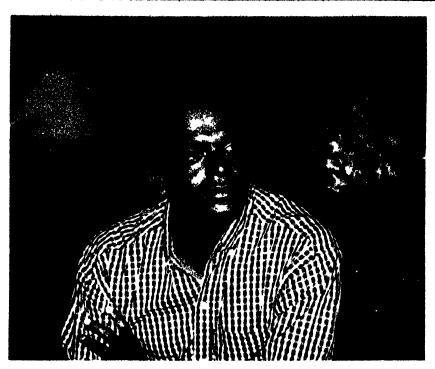
What went wrong after Bangladesh won the 1997 ICC Trophy to qualify for next year's World Cup and subsequently also got one-day international status?

I think we were low on confidence. We were losing one match after the other and it was very obvious that after our triumph in the ICC Trophy we were up against strong sides like India and Pakistan in the Asia Cup and the Independence Cup in Dhaka. We also played against world champions Sri Lanka in the Asia Cup.

Late last year, we also went down to New Zealand to play four-day games in which we had no previous experience. So, while we have played against some top sides in good touraments, we could not perform that well. As a result, the morale of the whole team was shattered. Also, there were too many changes during that period. But the main problem was that we had no confidence.

How do you view this continued chop and change attitude of the Bangladesh selectors, considering that as many as seven changes were effected after your success in the ICC Trophy in 1997?

Pirstly, one must understand that winning the ICC Trophy was the most important achievement in the history of Bangladesh cricket, maybe even in Bangladesh's short sporting history. Yes, there were as many as seven changes from that squad for the Asia Cup in Sri Lanka, but I believe that two



players had to be automatically eliminated from the sixteen-man ICC squad, to qualify for the 14-member Asia Cup squad.

Then, Mohammed Rafique was injured. I remember reading in the newspapers while playing league cricket in England that seven changes had been made in spite of Bangladesh winning such an important tournament. In fact, a close friend of mine, who also happens to be a friend of Sunny Gavaskar's asked me whether I myself was in the squad. But I made it even though I was worried at the time about losing my place. In my opinion the team should not have been changed in that period.

Who are the best young talents in your side?

I think, guys like 22-year-old pace bowler Hasibul Hussain and our wicket-keeper Khaled Mashud, who is still only 23 and vice-captain Khaled Mahmud are the brightest and best young talents around. Back home, we also have a few young players like Ridwan and Mustafique. Another very good cricketer is Shajid Ali Shipon. He has got a very pure technique. There are some good talents in the team and I am quite sure that they will perform really well in the near future.

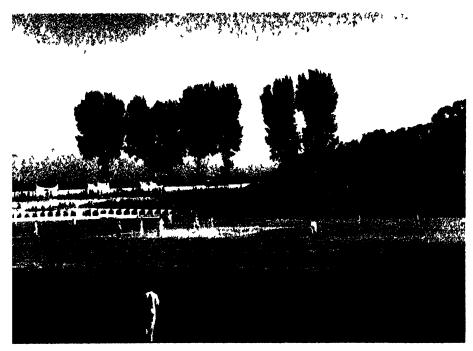
Are you happy with the management of Bangladesh cricket or would you like to see some changes come through? I think everything is in a good position at the moment, but we are still in a mish-mash state. To get us out of this hole we need to struggle

When you talk of such strong outfits as India and Pakistan, how long do you think it will take Bangladesh to beat them? It could take one week or maybe seven years, but honestly we could be about three to four years away from beating them consistently in

Interviewed by
Anirban Sircar, Kathmandu

all departments of the game.

somewhat.





Young Bangladeshi fans express their views after their team's win in the ACC Trophy

international cricket in Nepal In fact, for the first time, cricket of any sort was broadcast live internationally from the tourism-dependent country Four grounds in the Kathmandu Valley, all with mountains in the background, were used Eight nations

took part Fiji and Brunei withdrew for various reasons

The tournament had a wet start as heavy rains inundated all the grounds All four matches on the opening day were washed out, and doubts began to surface about whether it was the right time to hold the event However, dedicated efforts by the groundsmen put the ACC Trophy back on the right track

A late afternoon scene during the semi final between Hong Kong and Malaysia at the Tribhuvan University ground

Through the efforts of Indian curators Prem Chand Sharma of Faridabad and Mohammad Ali of Delhi, the ACC Trophy was played for the first time on natural turf wickets Though one must admit that the wickets were under-prepared owing to adverse weather conditions during the preparatory stages To make things worse, some of the tracks were not even covered overnight and forced cancellation or delay of matches Overall, the pitches were not conducive to batting as the ball often kept woefully low

There were some interesting scores The all-indigenous Japanese team were bowled out for only 18 runs in 20 2 overs in their match against Hong Kong The latter, in turn, blasted off the required runs in 2 3 overs The entire match was over in 75 minutes

The United Arab Emirates then defied all logic by amassing a score of 364 for 4 in 45 overs against lowly Thailand Skipper and opener Saeed Al Saffar benefiting from a dozen dropped chances, remained not out on 209 He followed this herculean effort with four wickets to help his side register a massive 292-run victory

Yet another all-ethnic Papua New Guinea squad left without playing their last group match versus the Maldives because they did not want to risk missing their one and only flight home in a week. This made sense since they had no hopes of reaching the semi finals

There is no doubt that cricket has a bright future in Nepal, which is an associate member of the ICC and a full member of the ACC The influence from a large cricket-crazy nation in India just next door and the surfeit of international cricket on cable television has played a good hand in popularising this sport among the locals, who mostly follow football

Crowds of up to 4,000 turned up to see their home team compete in the ACC Trophy Even the final featuring neutral nations was attended by 2,000 enthusiastic spectators



Paes and Bhupathi will lead the Indian challenge in tennis

mature tennis player in the four years that have passed since that Hiroshima fortnight. Enjoying his first decent 'run' as a top-100 singles player, Paes is aware that no Japanese, no South Korean or a Chinese figure in the top-250 of the ATP Tour rankings. On paper, at least, there is none to deny him the coveted individual gold. The fact that he unexpectedly came a cropper in the singles semis four years ago, plus his legendary knack of excelling while donning the country's colours, should be enough to give his challengers sleepless nights.

The doubles gold is also a sure bet. The only ones the world No.3 team of Paes and Bhupathi need to be scared of are themselves. In other words, they just need to guard against complacency. The team gold, too, shouldn't be a problem what with Paes himself involved in singles and the doubles. At the Asian level.

HOPING FOR A DECENT PERFORMANCE That's India's wish for next month's Asian Games

TENNIS

T'S the athletes who make all the noises prior to every Asian Games. They form the bulk of the Indian contingent and every Tom, Dick and Harry promises gold medals—or at least a silver—before leaving Indian shores. By the end of the Games fortnight, though, our big-talking track and field 'performers' are busy hiding themselves as they return home with loads of extra baggage rather than the promised medals.

Four years ago at Hiroshima, for example, all that the athletes could muster was a silver and two bronze medals. The country's four golds came via tennis (two), shooting and kabaddi. It promises to be no differnt

at Bangkok this time. Along with billiards and shooting, tennis looks to be India's most potential 'golden' disciplines. None more so than tennis, where Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi comprise a lethal twosome.

Of the three tennis golds on offer, India picked up two in the 1994 Games. The quartet of Paes, Gaurav Natekar, Asif Ismail and Zeeshan Ali topped the team event, while the Paes-Natekar combination clinched the doubles crown. Paes missed out on the singles gold, stunned by South Korean Yoon Young II in the semi-finals. At Bangkok, it would be a major surprise if the Indians miss out on a tennis sweep.

He will have an entirely different set of team-members, but Paes himself has emerged a stronger and more Bhupathi should be more than a handful as the second singles man. And, if the need arises, the much-improved Prahlad Srinath looks set to slip into Bhupathi's singles shoes.

Amitava Das Gupta

ATHLETICS

NDIA has performed creditably in the earlier editions of the Asian Games. The 1990 Beijing Asian Games were the first one in which Indian athletes came back without a gold. Again in 1994 at Hiroshima, India returned home without a gold medal.

The July '98 Asian Track and Field



Gulab Chand is India's best bet in the 5000m and 10,000m

Championships showed some promising performances by the Indian athletes and this should augur well for our prospects in Bangkok.

P.T. Usha competing in her 5th Asiad is once again the cornerstone of India's expectations. At Fukuoka in July, she helped India win a gold in the 4x100m relay, silver in 4x400m relay and 2 bronzes in 200m and 400m. The women's relays will definitely be India's best bet at Bangkok. With Rachita Mistry beating P.T.Usha in domestic meets and good support from sprinters like Shyla, Saraswati Dey, Vinita Tripathi the 4x100m relay will be India's best.

The 4x400m relay team is also in good form with Jyotirmoyee Sikdar, Rosa Kutty, Beenamol all clocking below 54 seconds. In both the relays, even though India will have to contend with China, there is hope of winning some type of medal.

In the individual events for women, P.T.Usha in the 200m and 400m, Jyotirmoyee Sikdar in the 800m and 1500m, Neelam J. Singh in the discus are all in with a chance to win medals for India. At present, all these athletes have not reached peak form, but one hopes with regular competitions in November they will peak at the right time to win medals for India.

In the men's section, it is the throwing events in which India has its

best chances. India had dominated shot putting till the 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi and one hopes Shakti Singh's new national record of 19.38m at the Mumbai Circuit Meet is an indication that he is ready to win a gold at the Bangkok Asiad. He will have to perform at his best to match Qatar's Saad Bilal for the gold.

In the discus throw, Anil Kumar and Ajit Bhaduria will lead India's challenge. Anil struck form after a long lay off in Mumbai recently and Ajit Bhaduria has a lot of experience to be in the quest for medals.

Two of India's most exciting performances at Fukuoka came from Paramjit Singh in the men's 400m and Gulab Chand in the men's 5,000m and 10,000m. Both will be up against stiff competition at Bangkok and it would be great if they can come up with medals.

Paramjeet has to contend with the brilliant Sri Lankan Tillakaratne and Gulab Chand will be up against the likes of reigning Asian champion Takoaka who continues to be in great form. However, the competition should bring the best out of the two and even if they improve upon their personal bests, that should be a good achievement.

In assessing India's performances, one can only comment that the potential seems to be there but the athletes need to compete more often with the best in the world. Only one competition at Fukuoka in July'98 perhaps is not the right preparation to excel.

Rupinder Singh

HOCKEY

OR the first time since hockey was introduced in the 1958
Tokyo Asian Games, arch rivals
India and Pakistan will be in the same group. This has occurred because
South Korea won the gold medal in the 1994 Asian Games at Hiroshima, whereas India bagged the silver medal and Pakistan the bronze medal.

Both India and Pakistan should easily qualify for the semi-finals of the men's hockey competition. They are placed in Group B which is relatively easier. Other teams in the group are Bangladesh, China, hosts Thailand and Hong Kong. News is filtering through that due to the floods epidemic, Bangladesh will withdraw from hockey so the group could have just five teams.

Thailand have been trained for two vears by former Air India Academy's wily coach P. Raphael but still lack the skill to really stretch India. Also in men's hockey, China and Hong Kong should be easy pickings. So the group toppers will be either India or Pakistan, which could depend on the outcome of their clash with each other. Goal difference and goals scored could also be vital in case the clash of the titans. India and Pakistan ends in a draw. In such an eventuality, Pakistan may have the edge because they invariably score more goals than India, especially in matches against the minnows of hockey. India's best bet of topping the group is to edge past revamped Pakistan in their league

Topping the group is important as South Korea is favoured to top Group A, with either Malaysia or Japan as runners-up. Sri Lanka, Kazakhastan and Uzbekistan are the other teams in the group. India's recent record in major international competitions

ANALYSIS

against South Korea has been quite dismal. So if we come second in our group, India is likely to contest for the bronze medal. However if we top Group B, and take on either Japan or Malaysia in the semi-final then India could make it to the final of the Asian Games hockey competition.

Novy Kapadia

FOOTBALL

FTER the Seoul Asian Games in 1986, no Indian football team has seen another Asiad thanks to the Indian Olympic Association denying the All India Football Federation an entry. India won the football gold in the inaugural Asiad at Delhi in 1951 and repeated the act in 1962 at Jakarta. India's last soccer medal at an Asiad was in 1970 when the team returned from Bangkok with a bronze.

The Indian football squad embarks on one more Asiad sojourn with the Indian Olympic Association finally giving the nod. The uncertainty being over, national coach Syed Nayeemuddin must now ensure that the team gears up to do well. A preparatory camp took place at the SAI South Centre in Bangalore.

Earlier, Nayeemuddin was not at all happy at the way the footballers were treated during the camp. "Only the executive director (SAI South Centre) showed interest in the camp," he said.

The cream of Indian football, including Baichung Bhutia, Carlton Chapman, Raman Vijayan, I.M. Vijayan had gathered in Bangalore to hone their skills. India are placed in Group B along with Oman and Japan, who played in the France '98 World Cup. While the chances of the Indian team appears bleak, with only one team qualifying for the second round, Nayeemuddin, nevertheless, did not appear disheartened.

Nayeemuddin did lament about the fact that the AIFF did not heed his advise of beginning the Asian Games preparations immediately after the national team's success in the Kathmandu SAF Championship.

"People always compare our team to those in the World Cup. There is lots of planning behind their success. How can we achieve success with this sort of ill-planning?" questioned Nayeemuddin.

Aıshwarya Lakshmı



Karnam Malleswari: one of our best bets in weightlifting

WEIGHTLIFTING

IVE women and two men lifters will form the Indian weightlifting squad for Bangkok. For a lay person, this might be a small team considering that Indian women have been doing well. The men's team also claimed 13 medals by seven lifters in the recent Commonwealth Games at Kuala Lumpur. But there is a big difference between the standard in the Asian Games and the Commonwealth Games. At Bangkok, India may just about manage to get two medals but the chance of a gold is far from certain.

The Indian team was selected on the basis of selection trials held in Patiala in mid-September. The Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF) took into account the performances of the last Asian Championship, the Hiroshima Asian Games and the latest rankings by the International Weightlifting Federation.

But there has been a change in body weight categories effective from 1st January this year, reducing nine categories to seven. Therefore, 2.5 kg was either added or reduced to the performance by the probables to ascertain a medal level performance.

According to performances at the

selection trials, only Karnam Malleswari is projected as a potential gold winner. N. Kunjarani may fight for a silver.

"I think these are the only two medals we should hope for," says the former heavyweight national champion Balbir Singh Bhatia who attended the Patiala trials as a

Government observer. Bhatia, however, felt that if N. Lakshmi was in training and had not decided to skip the trials, "India would have surely added one more medal. But I think Sanamacha Chanu will make up for this by at least winning a bronze."

At Patiala, Malleswari lifted 227.5 kg, which is seven kgs better than the qualifying mark set by the selectors. Her main rival at Bangkok would be China's Hou Kang Feng, the world record holder in the clean and jerk with 128.5 kg. But it's difficult to make a clear assessment as the national coach P.S. Sandhu is keen to make her compete in the 58 kg category instead of 63 kg.

In the trials, N. Kunjarani equalled the qualifying standard of 175 kg in the 48 kg category. Again, she will also have a Chinese, Liu Ling, to fight with for the top slot. But on current form, Sri Indriyani of Indonesia and Kyi Kyi Than of Myanmar may also pose a challenge to the gutsy Indian lifter.

Ranked third in the world, at 182.5 kg, Sanamacha Chanu improved it to 192.5 kg at the trials. But she has three Chinese to grapple with. Two of them, Chang Xixiang and Guo Huibing are head and shoulders above her, both having done over 200 kg. A bronze, therefore, is more likely for the North-East lifter.

A medal by any men lifter will be a bonus. A.K.Pandian had won the gold in the 56 kg. category in the Commonwealth Games at Kuala Lumpur. But expecting him to repeat the performance would be a Herculean task. Same is the case with Satish Rai, the Commonwealth record holder in the 77kg snatch, set at Kuala Lumpur even though he cleared 322.5 kg, to equal the qualifying mark in the trials.

Norris Pritam



"IT'S A HUGE RESPONSIBILITY"

Says newly-appointed national cricket selector ASHOK MALHOTRA

INTERVIEWED BY ARUP CHATTERJEE

ASHOK MALHOTRA says the first thing that struck him on accepting the national selector's job is that it wouldn't allow him to play competitive cricket anymore.

That, in a way, sums up the man who has brought a rare passion to his cricket. Off the field, it has been his shy smile and laid-back attitude that has been the most noticeable about him.

On a new innings as national selector, both this passion and quiet demeanour will be put to the test as Malhotra, once known as the 'Vishwanath of the North' for his elegant batting, takes fresh guard.

A career in first-class cricket for over two decades. Bengal's skipper. Ranji Trophy's highest run-getter. International cricketer. And, now, a national selector. Things have unfolded nicely, haven't they?
The selector thing was kind of sudden. Till even the month of September I was actually a professional player, turning out for my club in Scotland. Not that I hadn't been thinking about life after I hung up my boots, even though it was a somewhât scary thought for me.

Yes, this opportunity came at a right time, you might say. It's a job that hahch Maihetre: This job is going to be a top priority for me.

entails great responsibility and is a very prestigious one too. And a thankless one, I might add.

Your predecessor from East Zone, Sambaran Banerjee, is credited with bringing a number of players from the region into the national side. Is it a pressure living with this legacy, as you try to settle down in the selection committee? I don't see it quite that way. I'd even say that when you carry such suggestions too far, you're actually belittling the player concerned. It's the player who has to'do the tougher part of the job—justify the faith in him, with runs and wickets.

For argument's sake, suppose I pull strings and get a player into the side. How will he hold his own in international cricket if he doesn't have the talent? So my move will have backfired, and I'll be the butt of criticism. There'll be a loss of credibility.

I can only promise that where there is talent, I'll make sure they get the opportunities they deserve. That's basically how I see a selector's job, my job. It's in this context that I'd say Sambaran did a wonderful job. In fact, I'll say he's been the most successful selector from the East. Especially, when you consider the emergence of Sourav Ganguly. He gave Sourav the chance. Of course, Sourav grabbed it like nobody dreamt he would—probably, not even he thought so.

I'd give credit to the selector who gave him the chance, but I'd give more credit to the player who grabbed it. I'd say the same about Saba Karim and Debashish Mohanty.

A lot of talent has cropped up in East Zone in recent years—probably because Sourav has come in or probably because of the seeds we have sown during our playing days. You see players like Nikhii Haldipur, Rohan Gavaskar, Devang Gandhi, Alokendu Lahiri, Laxmi Ratan Shukla of Bengal. Then, besides Sanjay Raul and Debashish, you have S.S. Das, Mahapatra and off-spinner Satpathy from Orissa. Another player I'm looking forward to seeing is Rajiv Kumar of Bihar.

As a representative of your zone, you are expected to push forward its players at selection committee meetings. Yet national interests must be given priority. How will you cope with this contradiction? It's not about pushing players from your zone. As I've said, it's about ensuring that no injustice is done to guys who deserve the breaks. And I believe you can't keep a good man down for long.

There's this proposal for a three-man committee. What are your views on it?

There are merits and demerits in such a move, as there are with the five-man committee. I'd rather leave it to the BCCI to decide.

The World Cup is again being held in England, where we had our only success in the competition, and with a highly under-rated



Malhotra with his wife lehita and daughters Shreya and Ritika

bowling attack. Are the selectors going to adopt a horses-for-courses policy when it comes to selecting the squad this

time? The way the team is shaping up, barring the one hiccup in Zimbabwe, there is no need for drasuc changes. In Sachin and Sourav, we probably have the best ever opening pair in Indian cricket. Then you have Azhar, Jadeja, Dravid, Robin Singh, Nayan Mongia...The bowlers too more-or-less select themselves —like Srinath, Kumble, Joshi, Debashish, Prasad. I mean, you cart come out with a maximum of 18-20 names to select a squad of 14 for the World Cup. So, the idea is to give these guys as many chances as possible, and try out the many permutations and

combinations with them. For example, Azhar can go in at No.3 or Rahul can. Or, maybe, somebody can be tried as a pinch-hitter.

A more complete picture of the World Cup squad, I think, will emerge after the tour of New Zealand (in December), where conditions are expected to be somewhat similar to those we'll encounter in England during the World Cup.

New Zealand is where we'll know whether a pinch-hitter will be successful in those conditions or whether it'll be safe enough to let Azhar bat at No.3 and have our top three batsmen batting together.

Only the strategies need to be planned now. Only if somebody comes out with brilliant performances in the intervening period, can he upstage one of the settled guys. We're in need of some more all-rounders like Robin Singh. He's the only

genuine allrounder we have. The 1983 side was full of allrounders. Kapil, Binny, Mohinder, Madanlal, Kirti Azad...Even Balwinder Sandhu, who came at No.11, could bat.

I've played in the British Isles for 10-12 years and I know that when we go there, in the first part of the English summer, it's going to be cold, wet and windy and there's going to be a lot of green on the wicket. That's when someone like Sourav Ganguly may be our most successful bowler. Srinath, of course, is world class and Agarkar's strike-rate has been phenomenal, but it's guys who can seam the ball, who may have the greatest impact. Venkatesh and Dgbashish too can be great in those conditions.

If our batting clicks, I see no reason why we should not win the World Cup.

The off-spin of Dipak Patel in the

opening overs, or the first 15-over assault by Mark Greatbatch and Sanath Jayasuriya: the last two World Cup has seen some very successful experiments. Are you expecting some such thing this time?

Not really. Most of us were caught unawares on those occasions but I don't see anything as dramatic happening this time. So many one-dayers are played these days that there's very little you can have up your sleeve. The teams will have tried it already. Prabably, you can have the No.9, 10 or 11 coming up as pinch-hitters—like Pat Symcox—but that's about all.

I, however, feel pinch-hitters are not going to be as effective this time as they were in the sub-continent. So, the middle-order is going to come into play more often this time.

How would you rate the chances of the teams?

Besides India, I'll put my money on Australia and South Africa. Those are the teams which seem to be most disciplined and focused.

They always come with their homework well done...

Yes, and their fielding is awesome. That's their big plus. Especially, South Africa. If they score 250, it's like chasing 300. All 11 are good fielders. And they are not dependent on a few players. Someone like Lance Klusener, who goes in at No.9 or 10, can come in at No.3 and hammer the ball. Same for Pat Symcox, Mark Boucher or even Shaun Pollock.

Also almost everyone can bowl. Then, Jonty, with his fielding, is more than one bowler. Their only drawback, as we have seen several times, is probably that they choke at the last hurdle.

Australia haven't won the World Cup for a long time so they'll be very hungry. However, they might have peaked a little early. Remember, that's what happened when the World Cup went Down Under.

And you can't write off England. They are the dark horse.

You haven't played the World Cup...

Yes, when I think about it now, I say this is probably God's way of telling me that 'Okay, now (as a selector) I can be part of a World Cup' preparation. I played one-dayers before and after the World Cup, but missed out on the World Cup itself. That's a vacuum that can never be filled, but if the Indian team comes back with the Cup, I can at least tell myself that I have played a small part in it.



You have this famous friendship with Kapil...

turning out for my club

in Scotland"

Yes, and it has lasted for almost 30 years. We sort of started cricket the same day. I could never have imagined the first day I saw him that I was watching a legend in the making. We had gone for this under-14 trials (in Chandigarh) and this boy just came in, put his slippers behind the stumps and whacked the ball all round the park. We've been pals ever since, although he now lives in Delhi and I stay in Calcutta.

We still talk over the telephone, and share secrets. And we have our own

arguments. I'm probably his only critic he'll allow to get away with murder.

You didn't get to play for India as much as you would've liked, and yet he was the captain then...

I've never tried to butter anybody to get my way, and it was no differnt with Kapil. I'd give him credit too, for he made it clear that he was not going to put in a word for me, or something like that. "If you deserve, you play" was the message.

Sometimes, when I missed out, I did feel bad but, at the end of the day, I'm happy that whatever little I've achieved, I've done it on my own steam. It's not that people didn't take advantage of Kapil. Some of them did, those smarter than me.

When you moved to Bengal in 1987, you must have been caught between tugs from opposite sides...

I came to Bengal because I lost interest in Haryana. I was losing motivation as a cricketer. My wife being from Bengal also weighed in on my decision. Yes, a lot of people discouraged the move because my family and friends were in Chandigarh. Thank God I didn't listen to them. Calcutta has given me everything.

I've had my share of setbacks in Bengal too but it made me a better person and a tougher nut to crack. The move to Bengal, you might say, was my luckiest break. Here, I'm respected for whatever little cricket I've played, which I don't think I'd have got in Haryana. Look at the way Kapil is being treated, and I'm only a small fry as compared to him.

From here, where does Ashok Malhotra go?

First and foremost, I'll like to be able to do justice to my job as a selector. It's a huge, huge responsibility and it's going to be my top priority. After that, I'll definitely have something to do with coaching but I'm not going to launch anything till I'm sure I can give the time and do justice to it.

BY DHIMAN SARKAR

FTER some elaborate sparring, Mohun Bagan and Fast Bengal clashed for the real thing—the 1998

Tata Tea Super Division title

Expecting Asli Taargi because the match would make one and mar the other, over 100,000 congregated to watch the titans clash, under lights at Salt Lake Stadium on a humid October evening

A never-before golden goal ended the unprecedented league final It came off Raman Vijayan's boots and

Raman Vijayan being cradled by his East Bengal teammates after scoring the golden goal against Mohun Bagan to win the 1998 Tata Tea Super Division League title

TATA TEA SUPER DIVISION LEAGUE

NO FRESH TALENT

Even though East Bengal won the Super League title, the lack of quality footballers is a cause for concern

ACHOKE CHARHABARTY

the lanky striker from Madurai became the toast of East Bengal fans after being the target of abuse for most of the season.

In an apparent bid to check contrived results, the Indian Football Association (IFA) introduced play-off matches in all tiers of the league. In the Super Division, it meant all teams playing each other in the first leg with the top five qualifying for the championship round while the rest battled relegation. The top two among the quintet in contention for the title would play the league final.

If in the process, Mohun Bagan and East Bengal played each other thrice —the last two encounters happening within one week of each other-well, so be it. For a league which, in its centenary year, still only looks to a Mohun Bagan-East Bengal clash to provide succour, the more the merrier. Only a Derby tie gets the IFA cash boxes ringing and those who run football in the state therefore weren't complaining. An extra match -- in the earlier two-leg format they could meet twice -was worth it for the few hundred thousand rupees more it fetched.

Historic rivalries like the one that exists between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal are the soul and substance of sport. But playing each other too often could boomerang into a dilution of interest. If the IFA appreciates this, it is not reflected in their manner of going about things.

So the elite duo clashed, thrice but with only their last meeting having any impact on the championship. Mohun Bagan won the season's first encounter—after both clubs armed with equal dollops of cash from liquor baron Vijay Mallya weaned the best back to Calcutta—2-1. Bolstered by the Ghanaian trio, East Bengal returned the compliments when they met next.

They won again, deservedly and despite being denied a penalty, through Vijayan's golden goal and that, as they say, was that.

Reduced into an elaborate qualifying exercise, the only point of interest in the first leg was whether or Label Cup included, the most



Bhaichung Bhutia in an aerial tussle against two Peerless players

not Mohun Bagan would maintain their all-win record. Mohammedan Sporting's Moses Ohira (the Kenyan caught the eye with a flurry of goals early on) did what his more glamorous competitors could not. He blemished the green-and-maroon brigade's till then enviable run with an intelligent lob which Hemanta Dora, playing less like Chilavert and more like Higuita that day, had no answer to.

Mohun Bagan, however, topped the first-leg. East Bengal ended second with Mohammedan Sporting, promising to deliver much more than they eventually did, just behind.

Just when hopes of a turnaround seemed to be real, Mohammedan Sporting fell—with a thud. They stayed unbeaten longest in the first-leg, the only defeat coming against East Bengal. But that loss sent them hurtling on a one-way road to doom. They lost seven consecutive matches thereafter, the Kalyani Black Label Cup included, the most

ignominious being a 1-7 championship-leg drubbing from East Bengal.

Mohammedan Sporting snatched defeat from the jaws of victory against Peerless, losing 4-3 after leading 3-1 till late in the game. They also lost against the eventual third finishers Tollygunge Agragami and then Calcutta Port Trust. But the knockout punch was delivered by East Bengal's half-a-dozen goal victory margin. Mohammedan Sporting conceded their remaining matches, against Mohun Bagan and Calcutta Port Trust, citing an inordinately long injury list. Soon after they played the Bordoloi Trophy but with equally disastrous results.

It was a sad end to a promising start by coach Mridul Banerjee. In his first year with a major club, Mridul showed commendable ability in being able to instil self belief in a roster comprised essentially of castaways. It wasn't as if they set the terraces on fire but looked keen on putting up a fight, whoever be the opposition. It ended too soon. Coincidentally or otherwise,
Mohammedan Sporting's slump
started after a section of the
ramshackle, wooden galleries
collapsed some 20 minutes into the
match against Peerless. Despite the
authorities' claims to the contrary the
members' stands were overflowing
with people. The allegation, once again

The Ghanian trio and Bhaichung Bhutia celebrate the team's fifth goal (7-1) against Mohammedan Sporting who were doomed after their disastrous tie against East Bengal denied by the administration, was that the police had let more people in.

The reason for the resurgence in interest was the team's beating star-studde Mohun Bagan.

Even as the fans rose in anticipation of a goal, a section of the perimeter fencing collapsed on to the galleries.

Hell broke loose thereafter. With help arriving late, people torched a portion of the galleries. Nobody died but given the wooden stands' condition on the Calcutta Maidan's enclosed grounds, that was fortuitous. Cries for concrete galleries have gained decibel but since public memory is short it is quite likely status quo will prevail.

Till Chima Okerie, once again the league's highest scorer, and Bassim Yonan knocked the fight out of them in the season's first city Derby, East Bengal and Mohun Bagan, were on an even keel. Even though neither performed like a well-oiled machine, it was perhaps due to the superior individual ability that Mohun Bagan



Mohammedan Sporting's Moses Owino is about to direct a shot at the Aryan goal. Aryan lost the super division match

registered more impressive wins.

Unable to break free from their muddle-down-the-middle game, East Bengal hardly looked the megabuck team they are. Bhaichung Bhutia began well but then mysteriously channeled his efforts to other areas of the game instead of focusing on what he does best—score goals.

It induced a lack of confidence, nitherto not seen in the whizkid from likkim. And a goal drought which is sound to niggle the talented argetman. More than once, he nissed with only the goalkeeper to seat. Some of Bhaichung's lose-range attempts too belied expectations.

The Ghanaian trio's induction has bepped up the team. Not only did lefender Jackson Egygpong's 40-yard leader set up the golden goal for laman, his keeping Chima in check nattered too. Suley Musah's eccasional sorties down the right flank lelped East Bengal use the park's width better. And Emmanuel Opoku, he most talked-about among them, aught the eye with his fluid lovements, endless energy, accurate ong-range passes and snap shots. The



trio is yet to settle down fully and should be quite a proposition in the National League.

Having qualified for the National League and having spent a lot more on team-building this time around, more was expected of Tollygunge Agragami. But stand-out performances were at a premium from Nigerians Saeed Akinsanya, Chibuzor Nwakanma and Felix. Former East Bengal captain Dulal Biswas' injury sank them further. Though Tollygung did manage the third spot eventually after a brace sunk immediate contenders Port Trust, it wasn't a heart-warming show. Not only did Port sink Mohammedan Sporting once (their firts-leg tie ended in a draw), in sealing a fourth-place their return to the elite division was commendable.

Their goalkeeper Prashanta Dora, Mohun Bagan goalie Hemanta's brother, has been one of the season's finds. Adjudged best goalie in his first Santosh Trophy this year, Dora's form has won him a national call-up. In a year where the emergence of fresh talent has been woefully inadequate, Dora has been a pleasant surprise.

1998 SUPER LEAGUE RESULTS

CHAMPIONS: East Bengal (A record 25 times)

Runners - up: Mohun Bagan

Highest Scorer: Chima Okerie (Mohun Bagan): 13 goals in 12 matches:

Chima became the top scorer for a record sixth time **Other Notable Scorers**:

Dipendu Biswas (East Bengal): 10 goals in 14 matches Moses Ohira (Mohd. Sporting): 8 goals in 10 matches Bhaichung Bhutia (East Bengal): 5 goals in 10 matches Biggest Margin: 7-1: East Bengal vs Mohd. Sporting, Salt Lake Stadium, 6.10.1998. It was the biggest-ever victory margin, involving the Big Three

Hattrick: Dipendu Biswas (East Bengal) - 3 goals, vs Peerless, 24.7.1998

COMPILED BY HARI PRASAD CHATTOPADHYAY

CORRIGENDUM
The photographs of Keshav Datt in the
October issue were by Ashoke Chakrabarty



Interesting happenings in the international sports arena



(Above): An unidentified competitior blasts past Cairo's pyramids during the Rally of Egypt. 200 competitors representing 16 countries in their cars, trucks and motorcycles took part in the seven-stage rally which covered 2400 kms on the desert

(Right): Ditchwoman Leontien Van Moorsel-Zijlaard gestures on the podium after winning the Women's World Road Cycling Championships held in Germany



PHOTOGRAPHS AFP



(Right): Andrez Krzyscin of Poland, releases a dove during the award ceremony. He was the winner of the annual international Peace Marathon held in Slovakia



As South

(Above): The Al-Ahram international squash championships took place in front of the Gaza Pyramid at night

(Left): Don King (right) meets up with Frank
Maloney, the boxing manager of Lennox
Lewis. Mr.King stated that he is going to give
the world the fight it wants -- a unification
bout between WBC heavyweight champion
Lennox Lewis and IBF and WBA heavyweight
champion Evander Holyfield





Thai bull racers whip their buffalos during the annual racing in Chonburi, southeast of Bangkok. The festival is a centuries-old tradition of farmers racing their buffalos for a bit of fun at the end of the Buddhist Lent





(Above): An unidentified wind surfer jumps into the Stade de France in Saint Denis, north of Paris. This was during the 'Delichoc Techno Waves' event

(Left): A.J.Hackett breaks the world record for a 'bungee-jump from a building' with a 190 metre jump from the Sky Tower in Auckland

freewheeling

HE death of Florence Griffith Joyner, at the age of 38, was a stunning event. Here was a woman who, a mere decade ago, was regarded as a superwoman for her stupendous timings in the 100 and 200m. How could such a fit woman (with such lovely legs!) suffer a heart seizure and die so suddenly?

Her death had the international media speculating about her possible drug abuse but nothing could be stated categorically because she had never failed a drugs test. (Even the autopsy report stated that there were no traces of drugs in her body. But then how can drugs be expected to be found when she stopped running ten years ago?)

Interestingly, she abruptly quit athletics at her prime, a mere four months after random out-of-training drug tests were instituted. That doesn't seem like the behaviour of one who is innocent.

So, was Flo-Jo a cheat?

The answer seems to be in the affirmative. Otherwise, how do you explain the elongation of her jaw, the deepening of her voice, the slight fuzz on her upper lips, the pronounced musculature and the abrupt jump in standards from the bronze medal win in the '84 Los Angeles Olympics to an awesome world-record breaking performance in Seoul four years later.

"For the specialist, there is no doubt," confirmed Jeanne-Pierre de Mondenard, a French expert on drugs, "her incredible physical transformation was not natural. Even if you trained eight, 10 or 15 hours a day, it was humanly impossible to transform yourself in that way."

Let's assume that Flo-Jo was a cheat. The first lie has to be uttered immediately after she won the Olympic gold medals. "No, I do not take drugs. I am clean. It's because the other runners are jealous that they are spreading these malicious rumours."

The sad part about lying is that you have to tell several more untruths to defend the first falsehood and it goes on and on. Since she had become a star, she had to repeat the fabrication in countless print and television

interviews.

Along with Flo-Jo's prevarication, other people close to her had to participate in the untruth: her coach and husband Al Joyner, her parents, her siblings, her brilliant sister-in-law Jackie Joyner Kersee and her husband Bob Kersee.

Flo Jo probably reasoned that if she took steroids or human growth hormones, her performance would improve dramatically. She would then win races and become famous and earn lots of money and would never have any financial worries for the rest of her life.

Most of what she visualised came true, although not in the rosy way



Florence Griffith Joyner (pictured in 1984): moral lessons have to be learnt from her premature death.

that she imagined. She did make money but it was not the fortune that she envisaged. That's because she could never get rid of the suspicion that she had used illegal methods. Athletics experts were convinced her timings could not have been achieved without the aid of performance-enhancing drugs.

Unlike most former Olympic champions, she remained in the spotlight, probably because, she was

so attractive-looking.

So she would take part in celebrity events, endorse products on TV, help disadvantaged children, was the Co-chair on President Clinton's Council Of Physical Fitness and Sports and all along, proclaimed doggedly that her athletics achievements were 'clean'.

Yet, living like this can be an enormous burden. You can get tired of constantly having to dissimulate. The human psyche needs to live in truth if it has to flourish. Lying and cheating has a way of oppressing the mind, that is worse than, say, living a year in solitary confinement. Life can become so unbearable that sometimes it might lead to a death wish.

One wonders whether Flo-Jo ever thought if it was all worth it. A couple of world records, three Olympic gold medals, (the third one was for the 4x 100m relay), no genuine respect from the international athletics community and an awesome damage to the body. Was the price too high?

Incidentally, she's not the only one who expired in her thirties. Swedish discus throwers Goran Svensson and Stefan Fernholm, died, aged 36 and 37 respectively. Said Swede commentator Torbjoin Petersson, "Both the discus throwers became entrenched in pill abuse and a dependence which took their lives."

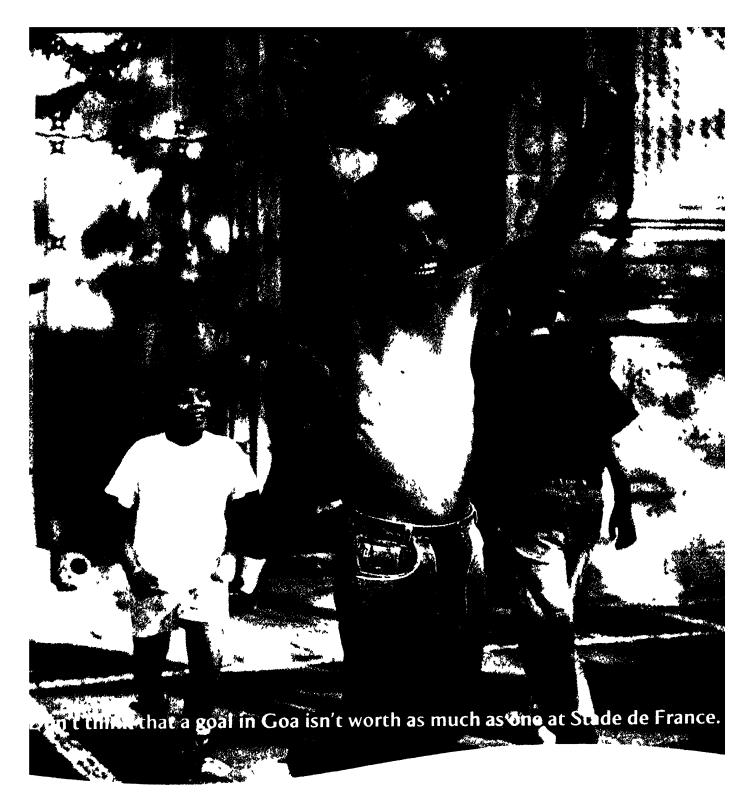
Sportsmen, these days, clearly lack a sense of moral values. Take the case of '96 Olympic swimming champion Michelle Smith: she has been accused of tampering with her urine sample by mixing it up with alcohol, during a sudden out-of-competition test.

Recently, a famous female German marathon star tested positive for too much of testosterone. The cycling circuit is dogged by rampant drug taking. International football is rife with drugs. Tennis has its drugs although it is still hidden.

Aspiring sportsmen should ponder deeply over Flo-Jo's life and ask themselves whether it is worthwhile to cheat. You could end up losing your life while you are in your thirties.

Think about it!

Shevlin Sebastian



The world is closer than you think.



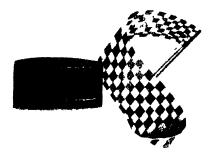
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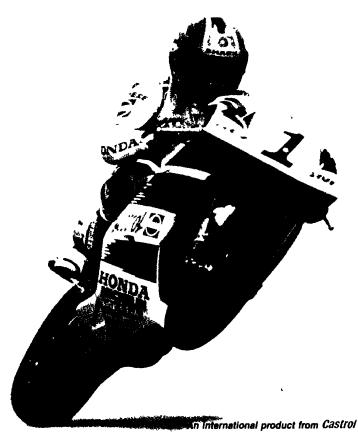
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ITPA SORKAR

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AWESOME

Sachin Tendulkar, with his all-round performance this year, is Sportsworld's 1998 Sportsperson Of The Year

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Mika Hakkinen is the Formula One World Champion







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FREEWHEELING

Editor: Mansur Alı Khan Pataudı

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH OF SACHIN TENDUI KAR BY



HIS year, Sachin Tendulkar has clearly moved into the genius level. He can no longer be classified as an extremely talented player.

Sachin is numero uno, the only player on the current international circuit regarded as a great by most of the famous ex-players, experts and commentators. Sachin has moved so far ahead that Brian Lara is now considered to be an extremely talented player and nothing more.

How does one define genius? It's difficult to do so. Suffice to say that they make things look very easy. But there is no doubt that the flowering of genius can occur only if there are years and years of relentless hard

that, hopefully, money will not satiate. It seems to be a psychic craving. Which is an extremely good sign.

It means that he will continue to score runs, score more centuries than any other player in the history of the game and probably be regarded as the only player who can hold a candle to Don Bradman.

There have been other achievements this year too. Vishwanathan Anand won several titles but he missed the most important one of World Champion, when he lost to Anatoly Karpov, in the FIDE World Championships final.

Paramjit Singh broke the 38-year-old record of Milkha Singh in the 400m.

The Bhupathi-Paes doubles team won several titles, although they are yet

against the same team at Sharjah earlier this year will now be regarded as classics. Cricket pundits are at a loss on how to classify his unbeaten 124 against Zimbabwe in the Coca-Cola Champions Trophy final at Sharjah. Terming it as a classic knock would be an understatement. So awesome was the quality of the batting, the domination of the bowling and the sheer array of strokes played.

It is also nice to know that off the field, he is such a courteous and accommodating fellow. Rarely, if ever, is he irritated by the numerous fans who ask for his autograph. He treats his elders with respect and much praise should be given to the middle-class Maharashtrian family background from which he comes from, with an elder brother who is a poet and a father who is a professor. It has enabled him to stay rooted, his feet on the ground, and he has been able to stifle the arrogance that arises from too much of fame.

So we had no difficulty in naming Sachin Tendulkar as Sportsworld's 1998 Sportsperson Of The Year.

ACHIN TENDULKAR set the cricket world n fire with his stupendous batting. Hence, we had o hesitation in choosing him as the portsperson Of The Year

work, of ceaseless practice in the nets, of tunnel-eyed concentration. Sachin, as is well known, spends hours in training.

Sachin has also shown, time and time again, that he still has an immense hunger for runs and centuries. It is an appetite to win a Grand Slam title.

P. T. Usha did well in the Asian Track and Field Championships. But none of these illustrious sportsmen, except maybe for Anand, is in Tendulkar's class. His innings of 141 against Australia at Dhaka, the 143

C O V E R S T O R Y

BY K O JACOB

ACHIN RAMLSH
TENDUI KAR—a name that
every Indian grandparent
and grandchild is familiar
with A person for which every
employer in India would not
charge sheet an employee for being
AWOL because the employer was
guilty of the same sin Tendulkar
today is an Indian who can bring
cities and economies, not just in India

but anywhere in the world to a standstill because everyone wants to have a glimpse of his genius

That is Sachin Tendulkar for you A diminutive man who carries the expectations and hopes of 980 million Indians on his seemingly frail shoulders. For cricket today as no longer just a game in India, it is the

Tendulker with Sir Donald Bradman on his 90th birthday. The Don admitted that Sachin is the only cricketer who reminded him of his own playing style.



national passion and if one man symbolises all this, it is Sachin Tendulkar, who is expected to win every game single-handedly

A lot has been spoken and written of this little genius exploits on the cricket field, but what about life off it for the master blaster? Tendulkar today endorses a whole lot of products from Adidas, ANZ Grindlays credit cards, Pepsi, MRF and a range of commodities

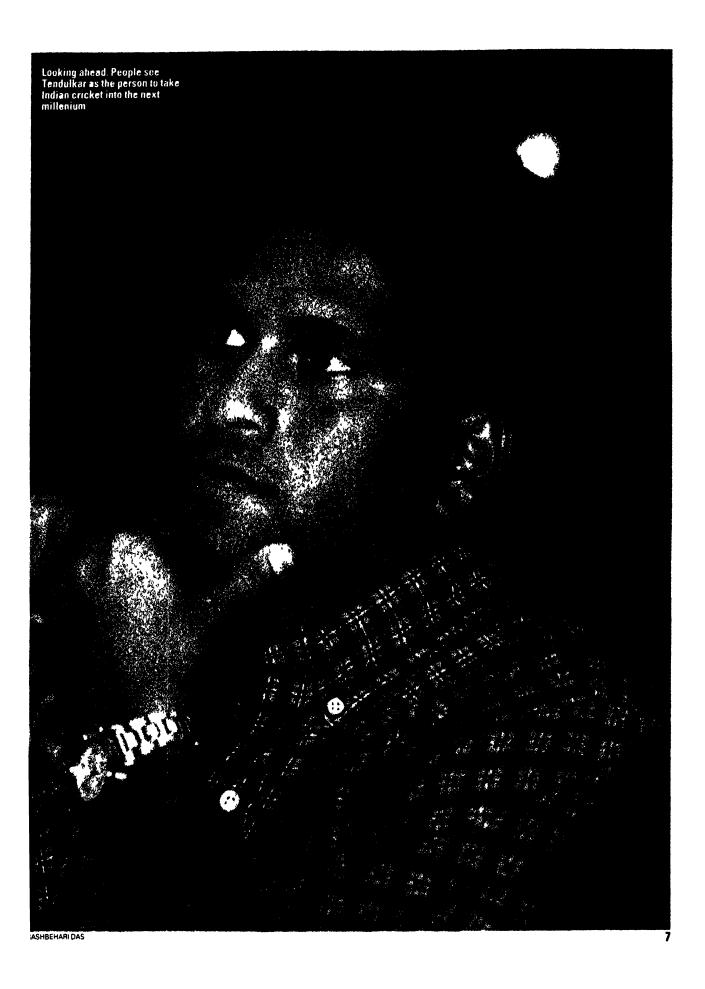
The sponsors have spent fortunes getting him to sign on the dotted line and in return expect him to be their ideal spokesman and role model. Even these expectations put enormous pressure on any individual, and the case is the most severe on Tendulkar.

The nation and even his teammates (they ll not admit to it. It is a team game you see) look up to Tendulkar in a crisis situation. When India is down and on the ropes everyone hopes Tendulkar to do the magic to deliver the knockout punch. Let's have a look at a couple of examples of how he has handled this pressure.

This was the semi final encounter against South Africa in the Hero Cup where the South Africans were cruising and needed six runs in the last over Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin was at a complete loss on whom to entrust the last over The packed crowd at Fden Gardens and millions watching the game on television waited with bated breath Then Tendulkar walked up to Azharuddin and asked to bowl the last over Bowl he did, calm as a yogi and managed to get India an incredible win

Or, what about the instance when India was chasing a total against Australia in the crucial qualifier at Sharjah in the Coca Cola Cup tournament when a sandstorm interrupted play? There was a chance that if the match did not resume India would not play in the final

While the TV commentators were speculating on whether the match would resume and while the Australians were relaxed and almost certain of play being called off, Sachin Tendulkar provided a totally different



picture.

He sat there in the players' enclosure, his face, an image of total concentration. He was so focussed, that he did not even remove his helmet or his gloves—the first thing a batsman does when play is interrupted.

Frentually, India went on to lose the match after play resumed, but not before Tendulkar with 143 (his career best) made sure that India qualified for the final. In the final against the same opponents, seething from the defeat of the previous match Tendulkar scored another century, and almost won the match single-handedly on his 25th birthday, and then dedicated the victory to the nation and to his wile.

No other batsman—not even Brian Lara, who is considered to be Tendulkar's closest opponent for the top slot—has the pressure of being compared to the best batsman of all times, Sir Donald Bradman.

This pressure situation has been thrust on Tendulkat by the Don himself, who told the world that Tendulkat's batting and his attitude on the field reminded him of his playing days. (Nobody will ever forget that Tendulkar was the guest of honour at Bradman's 90th birthday.)

Despite all these stresses, how does our protagonist react to squations? What makes him so special among the recent crop of international cricketers?

For starters, Tendulkar does have an unique temperament. He believes in silencing his critics by his performances on the field.

At the end of 1997, his captaincy and his form with the bat were blamed for the poor showing of Indian cricket. What did Tendulkar do? He gave no excuses for his team's performance or about his captaincy. The only point he chose to make was that runs did come off his bat in '97, even though it was not enough to win matches.

Tendulkar did not crib or pout when the captaincy was taken off him, and was given back to Mohammad Azharuddin. Even after being demoted to an ordinary

THE BLOSSOMING OF A GENIUS

SACHIN TENDULKAR is in a league of his own

HE first time I met Sachin for an interview was at Colombo in 1994 during the Singer series.

My opening question to him had been on what he thought were the chief attributes of Indian batting as a whole. I said, "A perception, stoked by the British, in particular, is that the Indian batting from Ranjitsinhji to Azharuddin has been wristy, supple and subtle. Would you agree with that assessment?"

"Aaah!", he replied, "I never saw Ranjitsinhji and the others play, so I can talk only of Azharuddin. I have been playing with him for the last five years. And certainly his batting is different because he is more of a wristy player than the others. He is extremely talented, very quick off his feet and he has got all the strokes. We have had all kind of players. Take Mr Gavaskar. I don't think we have any player today as technically perfect as him. So, India has produced all kinds of batsmen."

What had struck me in that initial interaction was his humility, a simplicity of manner bordering on naivete, the respect he showed for a renowned senior cricketer (the Mister in his reference to Sunil Gavaskar) and yet, in spite of all this, his very firm rebuttal to the main premise of the question I had asked.

"If any one batsman is going to change the perception of Indian batting as merely supple and wristy, then, it has to be you," I said.

"I just play my natural game," was his rejoinder. "I play according to the merit the ball deserves. So sometimes if a ball has to be attacked then I do that."

Those aggressive shots came

thick and fast against Glenn McGrath and Craig McDermott as the Australian opening ball bowlers were scattered to all parts of the Premadasa Stadium during the India-Australia match of the inaugural 1994 Singer series.

Sachin scored his maiden one-day hundred in this match. It was the 79th innings of his one-day international career. By then he had already scored seven Test hundreds. When I looked askance at him, he said, "Somehow I could not get a one-day hundred. There is no reason behind it. It is just that I got out in the 70's and 80's. That's about it. I have to forget the past and think of the future."

Sachin must have surely thought well and hard. In the next 128 one-day internationals, he struck twenty more hundreds. In the process, he became not just the record-holder in the limited overs version of the game but is also the highest century-maker of all time in both Tests and one-dayers.

It had taken Sachin almost five years to post his first one-day hundred.

After that, the runs came in a torrent. His second hundred followed a month after the first against Australia. That was in October '94 against New Zealand at Baroda. In the very next month, he scored his third hundred against the West Indies. Three successive centuries in September, October and November 1994 were followed by a period of relative drought with a solitary ton—his fourth-coming in all of 1995. Then came his sterling form in the 1996 World Cup followed by a string of century knocks in the

phase that followed the World Cup.

His thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, all these were scored in one month—April this vear—a record, even for the enormous batting talent of Sachin. All three of them were scored against Australia

After his sixteenth century, in the Indian dressing room at Eden Gardens, I pointed out to him that some of his best knocks, at least in the one-day format, has come against the Australians

against Australia," was Sachin's reply.

The Sachin, who notched-up that first century four years ago at Colombo, was a straightforward and simple 21-year-old from Bombay, who has shed some of that simplicity since then. Yet, he still has his head firmly on his shoulders. This is partly because of his upbringing and which his coach

Tendulkar's attitude towards the game, and towards fans, make him an ideal ambatsador for cricket

confidence and self-esteem of bowlers with both big and not so big track records. He may drive batsmen who consider they are 'cat's whiskers' to distraction and lure them into gifting their wickets and, to boot, will make no bones in exulting over their forced departure In short, Sachin plays his cricket hard, gives no quarter and asks for none.

Outside cricket, Sachin, however, has such a pleasing demeanour and personality that



"My best Test hundred also has come against Australia," he explained, "That was at Perth in 1991. So it's not just the one-dayers. But yes, off late I have had the chance to play them and I am pretty happy to have got runs against them."

"Now that you have your sixteenth century under your belt, which two innings in one-dayers would you rate your best?" I asked.

"The two hundreds at Sharjah

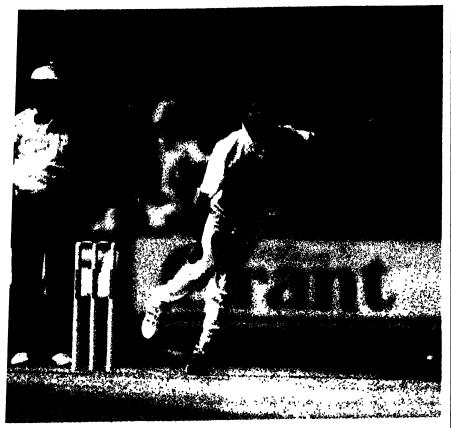
Ramakant Achrekar dinned into him even more firmly.

For all his achievements in international cricket and the stature it has given him, Sachin shows no arrogance except in the knowledge of his excellence in his craft. He shows joy and ribs Navjot Sidhu on beating and clean bowling him at the nets. He tells a bowler at nets that 'there's where you go if you pitch to me here.'

He repeatedly shatters the

he is liked by everybody. Add to that, his awesome and prodigious cricketing skills and you know why he is the cynosure of all eyes, wherever he goes and obviously, especially when he bats in the middle or at nets Never have I seen him rebuke an autograph seeker. He shows no irritation when he has to pose for photographs with his myriad fans and I cannot help but marvel at such savoir faire Rakesh Sharma

COVERSTORY





When it's not with the bet, Tendulkar's performing with the ball. Very often he has come to India's rescue in crisis situations with his bowling

member of the squad, he was full of beans, offering to do whatever he could for the cause of the team and for Indian cricket.

Tendulkar, recently along with Ajay Jadeja, had been accused of not performing for India at the amateur level because there was no money involved. After the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur, people like IOA President Suresh Kalmadi and Jaspal Rana criticised the cricketers for not being interested enough to win India a gold medal.

Tendulkar did not utter a word in self defence, took the flight out to Toronto and tried to salvage India's pride from the Pakistani mauling and almost succeeded. Then he went on to singlehandedly win matches for India both with the bat and the ball in the tournaments that followed—the Coca Cola Trophy final last month, being the latest.

Tendulkar's uniqueness lies in his psyche—a nature so special that only he can fathom or follow. Come what may, you'll never find him lose his cool on the field. You will not find him uttering the F-word when he gets out to a bad shot. You'll never find him bad mouthing a batsman when he has been hit for a boundary. He walks away with dignity to the pavilion, or to his run-up depending on the case, determined to do better at the next given opportunity.

Tendulkar, if he is genuinely out, just walks. One can never catch him showing dissent to the umpire even if the decision went against him. And to top it all, in spite of being the most followed-about cricketer, the most written-about cricketer, this image has remained squeaky clean. He does not have a controversy to his name in all these years, in spite of being so famous, and in spite of being trailed by the media at every moment of his life.

Tendulkar with his batting and his

Don't mess with him! Henry Olonga paid a heavy price for scalping Tendulkar. It is a humiliation that Olonga and the Zimbabyean won't forget in a hurry



demeanour on the field always gives the idea that he is enjoying his cricket and thinking and improving in each game. In spite of playing so many tournaments right through the year without a break, and after handling so much pressure off the field, Tendulkar does not talk about burnout or motivational problems. He does not talk about injuries and does not ask to be rested for unimportant or inconsequential matches in one-day tournaments. He just goes out there all guns blazing, and just when you think that you've seen the best from him, Tendulkar goes one step ahead to baffle you yet again.

Tendulkar, today, symbolises what an ordinary Indian --- so mired in mediocrity —aspires to be. He is today a role model for his fellow Indians as the ideal family man. An ideal son, an ideal brother, an ideal husband and an ideal father in spite of hardly being able to spend any quality time with his

Inspite of being the best batsman in the world, such is his humility, that Tendulkar usually laughs it off as nothing unusual

family. To top it all, he is rich and famous, an icon recognised all over the world, and an inspiration to his countrymen who are desperate for someone to relate to.

These are some of the attributes of this very special cricketer whom we chose as the Man-of-the-Year in '98. Add to it, the fact that Sachin Tendulkar has got his feet more firmly on the ground than some of the rookies in the Indian cricketing squad The way he treats the fans, the elders and the ex-cricketers give us a new definition of respect and humility

And it is not just Sportsworld who thought the same about Tendulkar. Two banners held up by spectators during the recently -concluded Coca Cola Cup final in Sharjah tell the same story. "Sachin take us to the 21st

century," said one banner. "Indians are cheats. They play with 20: 10 + 10dulkar," screamed another.

However, what is frightening is that Tendulkar is only 25. The way he took on Shane Warne during the Australian tour to India and Sharjah, the way he took on Henry Olonga and Co. and the Zimbabweans in the final of the Coca-Cola Cup at Sharjah is alarming news to bowlers all over the world, to say the least.

If Tendulkar has achieved all this at so young an age, where will he end up when he finishes his career? You cannot put a time frame or a framework to his exploits. When he finishes, Sachin Tendulkar could well be considered as one of the best human beings to have played the game of cricket.

Sachin Tendulkar has done and will continue to do India and every Indian proud. One can describe him in just two words: SIMPLY AWESOME!

11

THE SUPERBICARER IN FIGURES



SACHIN TENDULKAR

ONE-DAY INTERNATIONALS: BREAK UP AGAINST EACH COUNTRY

M		Inn	NO	Runs	H.S.	Avge	C	F	Ct/St	Balls	Runs	Wkts	Avge	BB	1
PAK	35	33	4	1080	118	37.24	2	8	18	745	646	13	49.69	3-45	
NZ	20	19	0	900	117	47.36	2	6	3	420	373	7	53.28	2-29	1
SL	38	36	5	1341	137	43,25	4	7	14	653	500	12	41.66	3-43	l
ENG	13	13	1	362	91	30.16	-	2	6	174	168	0	-	-	I
BANGL	5	4	0	163	54	40.75	-	1	2	63	54	3	18.00	2-8	۱
WI	24	24	4	803	105	40.15	1	7	6	684	489	16	30.56	4-34	ļ
SA	27	27	0	732	114	27.11	1	4	5	534	442	3	147.33	1-19	I
AUS	21	21	0	1260	143	60.00	5	6	12	577	433	13	33.30	5-32	I
ZIM	20	19	4	779	127*	51.93	4	1	4	380	358	6	59 66	1-6	l
UAE	1	1	0	63	63	63.00	-	1	1	30	22	0	-	-	١
KEN	3	3	2	243	127*	245.00	2	_	-	66	64	0			l
(Total)	207	200	20	7728	143	42.93	21	43	71	4326	3549	73	48.61	5-32	ı
At Home		67	8	2687	137	45.54	8	18	21	1632	1372	37	37.08	5-32	İ
70							1								ĺ
Abroad		133	12	5041	143	41.66	13	25	50	2994	2177	36	60.47	4-34	ĺ
137															l
World Cu	P	14	2	806	137	67.16	2	6	4	462	329	4	82.25	2-34	ĺ
15															l
World Series		10	1	401	77	44.55	-	4	4	227	152	2	76.00	1-5	l
10															l
Sharjah		33	5	1534	143	54.78	6	6	10	781	625	11	56.81	4-34	l
33			1												ĺ

In Last 5 Calendar Years

	T	1		1				T .	T .					
1994	25	25	2	1089	115	47.34	3	9	8	<i>7</i> 62	62 9	14	44.92	3-36
1995	12	12	1	444	112	40.36	1	1	6	288	249	4	62.25	2-49
1996	32	32	2	1611	137	53.70	6	9	13	825	725	9	80.55	2-34
1997	39	36	3	1011	117	30.63	2	5	14	496	434	6	72.33	2-61
1998	34	33	4	1894	143	65.31	9	7	14	742	636	24	26.50	5-32

Limited-overs International Records

- Youngest Indian and second youngest player in limited-overs Internationals. (Debut v Pakistan, Gujranwala, 1989-90)
- Youngest to score a fifty (53) and win the MOM award in a limited-overs Intl. match (v Sri Lanka, Pune 1990-91. Age 17 yrs/225 days)
- Holds the world record of hutting most (21) hundreds in limited overs Intl. matches.
- Holds the Indian record of hitting most (7) sixes in a limited overs innings- 100 v Australia, Kanpur 1997-98.
- Holds world record of playing most (185) consecutive limited overs matches.
- Holds world record of bagging most (32) Man of the Match Awards.
- * Most runs in a Calendar year (1894 from 34 matches)
- Most (12) Man of The Match awards in a Calendar year 1998
- Most hundreds (9) in a calendar year 1998

TESTS: COUNTRY-WISE BREAK UP

	М	INN	No	Runs	H.S.	Avge.	С	F	Ct/St	Ballis	Runs	Wkts.	Avge	BB
PAK	4	6	0	215	59	35 83	-	2	1	30	25	0	-	-
NZ	7	10	3	229	88	32.71	-	2	4	-		- 1	+	-
ENG	9	14	2	975	177	81.25	4	4	9	78	30	0	-	-
SL	12	14	1	947	148	72.84	5	2	8	66	13	0	-	-
AUS	9	16	2	824	177	58 85	4	1	7	296	141	4	35.25	2-10
ZIM	3	4	0	103	62	25.75	-	1	-	54	19	0	±	-
SA	10	18	0	609	169	33.83	2	2	8	70	32	1	-	1-9
WI	8	12	1	691	179	62.81	1	5	10	36	28	-	-	_
(Total)	62	94	9	4593	179	54.03	16	19	47	630	296	5	59.20	2-10
Abroad	38	58	5	2693	177	50 81	10	10	28	436	203	4	50.75	2-10
At					1		ŀ							
home	24	36	4	1900	179	59 37	6	9	19	194	93	1	93.00	1-41
								i i						

* Records

- * Youngest Indian and fourth youngest player (Age 16 Yrs 209 days)
 * Youngest Indian and second youngest Test player to hit a hundred (119 not out v England, Manchester, 1990- Age 17 Yrs/ 112
- * Youngest player to score a Test hundred in Australia (148 not out- 3rd Test at Sydney, 1991-92- Age 18 Yrs/256 days)

 * Only Indian player to have scored a century on debut in Ranji Trophy, Duleep Trophy and Irani Trophy

COMPILED BY RAVI KANT SRIVASTAVA





AJAY JADEJA
is in the Indian
Test side again
not just as a
player, but as the
vice-captain too.
In this interview
he talks about
life prior to this
event and also
reveals a personal
side of him

INTERVIEWED BY RAKESH SHARMA

N the evening of the day the Indian Test squad for the tour of New Zealand was announced, this writer called up Ajay Jadeja on his mobile phone and congratulated him for not merely finding a berth in the Test side but also for being made the vice-captain for the Tests too. I began by asking...

How does it feel now that you are back in the Test side and to top it all, you have been made the vice-captain also?

I am overwhelmed by the trust imposed on me by making me the vice-captain. I will do my best to justify this trust. It gives me an added despondent over his Test career, who had interfaced with this writer in Dhaka during the Wills International Cup at Dhaka. Following are the excerpts of that interview...

The vice-captain of the Indian one-day squad, captain against Kenya, and in the Commonwealth Games, and yet Ajay Jadeja does not find a place in the Indian Test squad. What goes on in his mind? How does he feel?

Nothing goes on in my mind. The only reason that I haven't played in the last couple of Test matches has been because there hasn't been a need for a sixth batsman as the first five

I have seen Ajay Jadeja timing (his strokes) so exquisitely, perhaps as well as his grand-uncle or great grand-dad did in their days—during the 1st Test against New Zealand at Bangalore in 1995. Is the same Ajay Jadeja not good enough to open for India? It's not the same. I think a cricketer goes through patches, like all the greats have had good and bad seasons. It just so happened that when we were touring England, I had a bad tour and the new guys did pretty well—Rahul and Saurav grabbed on to their places and there are no places to grab now. It has nothing to do with an individual player --- you may be a great player, but if you have been out and the other



responsibility, but it will not affect the spirit of my game and my attitude or temperament. It is a great honour to be chosen as vice-captain for India on a tour.

I am glad to be considered as an opener for the Test team. I did not want to be branded as just a one day player. Being a vice-captain and opener are important roles and I am confident of doing well.

However, it was an altogether different Ajay Jadeja, a touch

Ajay Jadeja has been more than an useful contributor down the batting line in one-day cricket for India. He has pulled India back from many crisis situations

automatically pick themselves. The top five have been doing so well that there is no place in the side. In the last Test match, it was an all-rounder who played; it is not as if someone opened in my place or came in as a batsman. So there is nothing apart from this, and I am going to keep working on my game and wait for the opportunity to come my way.

guys are doing well, you don't get in until they give you a chance

So, was Edgbaston in 1996 your undoing?

Yeah, I think that the first Test was probably where I lost it and then I was shifted down the order in the next Test and did not play after that.

At Lord's, in the second Test, you did not get very many runs.

Yeah, that's where I got three innings and I didn't do well, and the others

really grabbed on to the opportunities

Or had your batting as the swashbuckler at No.6 in one-day cricket made you lose touch as an opening batsman?

No, no. Nothing of that sort. It's not for such a reason that I have lost out. It's a very simple reason: there is no place in the side. There is no batsman that you can take out and put me in, and the team needs the bowlers (five) Maybe if a batsman had played in place of me, maybe I would have had something in my heart or in my mind. I don't see it as I am not picked, but I see it this way that 'there is no place in the side'.

Coming to limited overs cricket, haven't you scored more runs as an opener than as a No.6?

In limited overs cricket, any cricketer who opens will score more than those playing at numbers six, five, or even four. Even if you are batting at three, you can get in only if one of the first two guys, gets out. More than the number of runs scored by a batsman in one day cricket, it is more important as to what number he has scored them at.

Ajay, today you are a very successful man, but are you happy with the cricket you are playing?

I am very happy. Today people might say that cricket is a profession but when I started playing in 1983-84, it was nowhere close to a profession and the only reason I played this game is because I loved the game. Now that I have made good use of playing at No.6 and at No.5 today, so I am probably enjoying it more everyday. It hasn't got monotonous; it hasn't been the same cricket for me all throughout. I have been on a graph that has gone up and down, up and down. And there is a new challenge for me virtually everyday.

Yet Ajay, any good cricketer worth his salt always says that the true test of a cricketer comes in the longer version of the game—in Test cricket—which you



Fielding is Jadeja's forte, and more often than not, if the ball is travelling towards him, the batsmen start their walk back to the pavilion because he doesn't spill many

have not been playing too often.

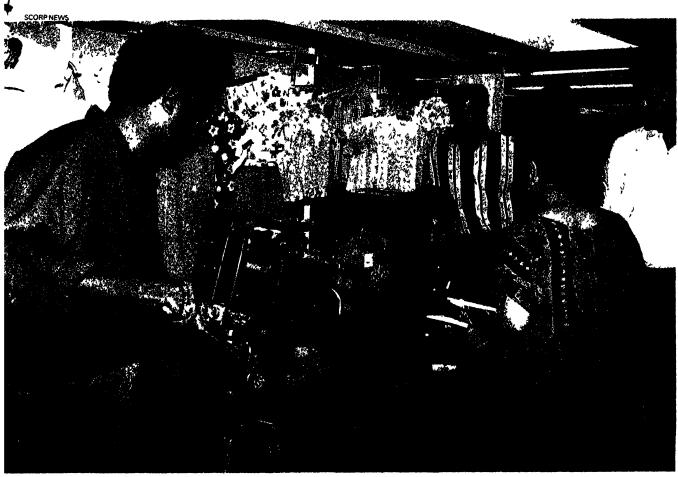
Not too well either. Because, I've had a brief career in Test cricket. I have not had a long run in Test cricket like five or ten Test matches together. I have had an eleven Test-match career of which, at least, I can remember three-four games and even people do remember me in those. So that does satisfy me, but what disappointed me in my Test career is that every time I've scored I have not gone on to getting three-figures. A hundred in cricket is a magical figure. Once you get to that magical mark, you do tend to get a cushion behind you.

In cricket you do tend to have good days and bad days, and if when playing well as at Bangalore in the Test you mentioned (against New Zealand '95), had I gone on to get a hundred, I would have probably played another Test-match and you never know, I would have scored again and probably held onto a place. As it transpired, I

couldn't. Then I got a opportunity in Antigua. I didn't do too badly there. I got a 90 odd. Then there was just one more game. And then we were in Sri Lanka playing in a game where 900 runs were scored and that is the game I missed. So it is one of those things where I have myself to blame, I guess. If I had made the most of the opportunities I had, probably someone else would have been saying the things I am saying now that 'there is no place in the side'.

Is it the roll of the dice—lady luck—that has gone against you?

Luck is a major factor in cricket. But if I wasn't lucky enough, I wouldn't have made it to Indian cricket. That's the way I feel. At a certain level there is not much of a difference between most of the cricketers and you have to be there at the right time and the right moment, which I think I have been quite fortunate to be in. I have no



regrets that I haven't played so many Test matches because I have been playing cricket. That is what I wanted to play. When I started playing it was only in my backyard, and then at school, but I was enjoying the cricket I played as much as I am enjoying it now.

There is a view that Ajay Jadeja is being fast sucked into Bombay cinema, towards an acting assignment, in course of time. Is that true?

I know I spend a lot of time in Bombay, and I know a lot of people from the film industry. They are good friends. There have been talks once in a while; we have had chats and meetings about doing movies. But there is nothing at the moment.

Cricketers like Salim Durrani and Sandip Patil took up acting assignments in the autumn of their careers. Would your taking up a film role signal With his spontaneity and ready exuberance, Jadeja has more than a reasonable amount of fan following and advertisement contracts. One of the most saleable Indian cricketers

the onset of autumn on your career-graph?

The first thing that I would like to clear is that I have not taken up any acting role and neither is anything on the cards as such in the near future.

Leading weekly news-magazines have put in their back-pages, in eye-catchers etc. that....

Like any media, tomorrow you can say what you want. There is sometimes little that I believe in what is printed because there has been a story a month ago that I am engaged now, or going to be engaged to someone.

Oh, your link-up with Tabu! No, to Bhagyashree's sister and that the families know each other. My father was a Member of Parliament:

he knows about seventy thousand families; I can't possibly marry all their daughters. I cannot marry every woman I know. I wish I could. If the Press says I am doing a movie that doesn't mean that I am doing one unless I say so. And if I plan to do one I'd let everybody know

With so many gifted women seeking your friendship, are you going to remain like our Prime Minister, a bachelor unto last? Why not? If the man who runs our country can be, why not me? You never know what's going to happen tomorrow, but as of today, I have no plans.

Coming back to cricket, you keep talking to your team-mates most of the time, but what do you say? More often than not, it has the effect of cheering them up. How come you do that?

I guess it is a bad habit that I can't sit still, or be quiet, and I can assure you



most of the time it is not about cricket, on the field also. There are times when I crack a joke on the ground. I get people to laugh or I like to laugh myself. It is just the way I am

Have you been like this ever since a young boy?

It s just not me others do it to me too I guess I have been through lots of ups and downs that helps because I know at what stage somebody is not feeling comfortable so I know how it feels unlike someone who has never gone through a really bad phase. He would not know what it feels like batting in a bad phase or bowling in a bad phase or when you are trying to make a comeback.

How much of a toll does a comeback take on a player?

I think a comeback is the most difficult thing in cricket and more so in Indian cricket. To make it to a side is initially quite easy but once you have been there and not done well to get that label or tag off you is very difficult. Jadeja with Sachin Tendulkar Both have immense respect for each other, and always seem to be enjoying each other s company

Ajay, have there been moments of self-doubt when you've said to yourself, 'Am I good enough to play Test cricket for the country'? The simple argument the simple fact

is that if I had these doubts I should have had them on my first tour of South Africa a disastrous one for me And every time that I have made a comeback I have returned a better cricketer So I think that says it all if I had doubts I wouldn t have made an effort to come back to try and do better

Finally, when you hang up your boots, what would you like to be remembered most for?

The only desire I have is that the team-mates I ve played with should look back and feel and say that they missed me at this place or that they miss me today I know, in fact I am sure I am a kind of guy who will not have great records to show at the end of my career which those who look

into books would be moved to say he was a great cricketer. But all my life. I we wanted that when I am forty fifty or sixty or whatever if I see an old team mate of mine, he should walk up to me and say. Hello, rather than run away from me saying, this guy was worried only about his own game.

Or else I d like to be remembered in the team as the guy who was there for everybody and everybody was there for him I would like to be remembered in my side rather than in the world no matter how big a cricketer you may have been -you may have been the world record holder once you ve packed up your bags and gone you are not sought after anymore because there is a new star coming up each day How many people remember Salım Durranı or Ghavri today? In their times they were great cricketers. There will be stars after I finish hopefully not as soon as people think Hopefully, I'll try and stay on for as long as I can But I would like to be remembered in the dressing room as long as I can

LOOKING BACK

Cartoon by GOPAL SARKAR



THE YEAR THAT WAS

A look at the main sporting events in 1998

Left French skipper Didier Deschamps proudly holds aloft the World Cup trophy after the last Final of the millenium. They humiliated reigning champions, star-studded Brazil 3-0 in the Final on home soil. France ended their dream run by scoring the most goals (15) by any team in the 1998 extravaganza Top right The God that failed. Brazil—and his innumerable fans worldwide --- expected a lot of fireworks from the wily Ronaldo but he turned out to be a big disappointment, especially in the Final against Zinedine Zidane and company. The lethal striker who went through some 'anxious moments' during the later part of the tournament played the Final with a pain killer but couldn't produce his best. In short, the Player of the Year was a flop and the picture shows it all Below. Mexico's Luis Hernandez scores the second goal against South Korea. He was the team's leading scorer with four goals











Left Underdogs Croatia, the 'babes of the 16th edition of the World Cup earned the applause of the football fraternity with their sterling performance. The Croatian attack was mainly spearheaded by their most dependable Davor

'Sukerman' Suker, who is seen he celebrating the team's victory against Holland. Suker won the Golden Boot at France '98 Right: Former World Cup champions Argentina played well in patches but falled to get to the ultimate round in spite of a formidable strike force. Picture shows Claudio Lopez celebrating highlight goal with Gabriel Batistuta against Holland. Batistuta scored hat-trick in successive World Cups







Top Olympic champions Nigeria were quite impressive in their short stint in France. But they will have to do their homework assiduously in the future to reach world standards Picture shows Denmark's Peter Moller pulling Nigerian Mutin Adepoju's jersey during an interception in round two The unfancied Danes eliminated the African team from the competition Above left Iran made their debut among the three teams (South Korea and Japan being the other two) from the Asian zone, but they too have to work their way up to match the more formidable European and Latin American counterparts. Here Yugoslavia goalkeeper clashed with teammate Goran Djorovic in their group tie against Iran



(Top) Indian cricket had a relatively good outing in 1998
Taking over as the captain Mohammad Azharuddin began by winning the Independence Cup in Dhaka, keeping intact his reputation as the most successful Indian skipper. Their balance sheet showed a few losses including some inexplicable ones like their performance in the Commonwealth Games, and in the Sahara Cup in Canada. Overall, celebrations like this after winning the Singer Akai Nidahas tournament in Colombo were common in Indian cricket this year.

(Right) When Indian cricket was looking for an able support system for Srinath and Venkatesh Prasad, Ajit Agarkar came along Today he has emerged as a bowler who can get the vital breakthroughs when needed Not just that, this Mumbai lad has wowed everyone with his batting too His 26 off 12 balls against Sri Lanka at Sharjah will will have begotten in a hurry by the



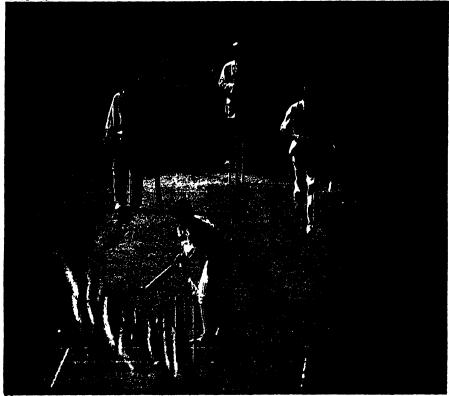




(Top) It was billed as the clash of the champions. The best batsman in the world, taking on the best spinner of the world on spinning tracks. However, it was a no contest with Sachin's willow dominating the proceedings throughout. "I will be going to bed having nightmares of Sachin just running down the wicket and belting me back over the head for a six," said Warne after Sachin was finished with him.

(Left) Indians gifted Zimbabwe their second Test victory in 31 Tests when they failed to get to a meagre lead posted by the Zimbabweans in the one-off Test Here Heath Streak and Henry Olonga make off with the spoils of victory India had defeated them in the one-day series





(Top): The West Indians pose with the Wisden Trophy which they managed to win for the 13th time running

(Left): It was the series that a lot of people were looking forward to. The Englishmen were on tour to the West Indies trying to salvage their cricketing pride, and the Wes Indies led by Brian Lara for the first time were giving nothing away. However, dubious history of sorts was created when the first Test at Sabina Park had to be abandoned. The pitch was a minefield with the English batsmen getting hit by both Walsh and Ambrose. Play wa called off by the umpires when England were 17-3. Picture shows Alec Stewart getting the 'treatment' from Curtly Ambrose





(Top) Pakistanı cricket saw a lot of turmoil this season Allegations of bribery and match-fixing surfaced again, and the government instituted a judicial inquiry to probe into the matter For their part the Australians also testified before the judge Meanwhile, Aamir Sohail was made the skipper of the team Former captain Wasim Akram added drama to the issue by saying that he would not play till his name was cleared in the bribery's scandal, resigned, and then made himself available for the home series against Australia which the hosts could not salvage The 4-1 Sahara Cup victory against India was a high point for the Pakistanis (in picture)

(Right) Hansie Cronje and his man lived up to their reputation of being the most effective one-day side in recent times. They won the Wills International trophy held in Dhaka, defeating West Indies in the final. It was the first time that all the nine Test-playing countries participated in a knock-out tournament which was billed as the mini World Cup

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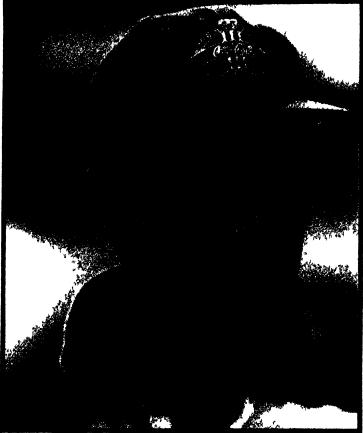




(Top): India ended their one-day campaign in 1998 on a winning note thanks to some superlative performances from Sachin Tendulkar. They won the three-nation Coca Cola Trophy defeating Zimbabwe by 10 wickets in the final at Sharjah. It was the first 10 wicket victory in a final of a one-day tournament

(Right): Brian Lara shown here on arrival at the Johannesburg airport, almost put the historic South African tour in jeopardy, after he led a players' revolt asking for better pay scales. Both he and Carl Hooperwere stripped off their positions, but were later reinstated, and the dispute solved after the West Indies Cricket Board, and even South African leaders like Nelson Mandela and Ali Bacher intervened





(Top) When Alec Stewart took over as captain of the England team (in picture) he was supposed to bring English cricket out of the doldrums. Against the visiting South Africans, the hosts managed to pull off a series victory England had not won a five-Test series since '86-87 and not since 1955 had won the decisive match of a five-Test rubber. South Africa though had won the one-day Texaco Trophy against England 2-1. The Test series was marred by a lot of controversial umpring decisions.

(Left) Ian Healy has been doing yeoman work for the Australians both as a wicketkeeper and as a batsman. In the first Test against Pakistan at Rawalpindi, Healy caught Wasim Akram who became his 356th Test victim, a world record for most dismissals by a keeper. Healy, who is an integral part of the Australian Test side, impressed throughout the year with his sterling performances.



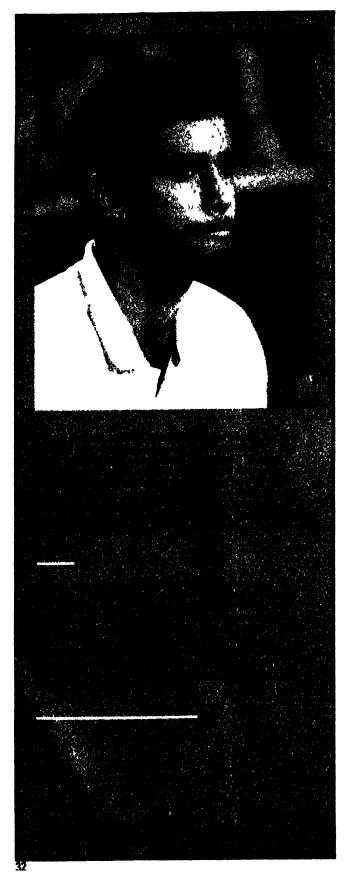
Lindsay Davenport pulled off one of the major surprises this season by toppining Teen Queen' Martisa Hingis from the No. 1 slot in the WTA rankings. Always regarded as a tringe player who did not have it in her to win a major title Davenport the reigning Olympic champion defeated. Hingis in the final of the U.S. Open to win her first Grand Samitalities.





(Extreme left, top) Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi had a dream run as a doubles team this year They reached the semis of three Grand Slams and won six titles including two Super Nines (Rome and Paris) They beat the Woodles for the first time ever, at the Shanghai Open Leander for the first time since '90 pulled out of a Davis Cup tie (vs Italy) due to injury Leander also won his first Tour singles title (Hall of Fame, Newport) and reached a career high of 73 after the Pilot Pen tournament where he defeated Pete Sampras However, during the fag end of the year, the second ranked doubles team fared dismally at the World Doubles Championship where they lost all their matches

(Extreme left, bottom)
The queen was
back and how Steffi
Graf made a stupendous
comeback (pictured here
with Nathalie Tauziat
after winning the WTA
Tennis tournament in
Leipzig for her 105th
title) Gráf was back to
the form of yore, and
after that in two
tournaments went on to
defeat Davenport,
Hingis, Novotna and
Tauziat Graf became the
first woman ever to
defeat the top three
players in the world in a
four match span













If Steffi Graf hogged all the headlines for making a stupendous comeback, there was one Mr. Andre Agassi who not so long ago was among the best to play the game of tennis. Some attitude problems, a loss of interest, motivational problems and constant losses to unfancied opponents made him a pale shadow of his former self. His ranking plummeted and he ended '97 ranked 140. However, the showman that he js, Agassi announced his intentions to be there right at the top at the beginning of the year. No one took him seriously. Andre did, and ended '98 back in the top ten. What happens in '99?



SCORP NEWS ACTION PLUS

(Top): Vishwanathan Anand (pictured here with wife Aruna and mother) came really close to winning the World Championships of chess this year at Lausanne. He lost in the Final to Anatoly Karpov. It was quite a lop-sided Final with a fresh Karpov taking on and defeating Anand who had played 23 games before the Final, and then played 8 games against Karpov. In total Karpov played eight games in a week, compared to Anand's total of 31 games in a month without a break in between

(Right): Michael Doohan of Australia won the 500cc Grand Prix motorcycling Championships for the fifth consecutive time this year. Doohan who rides for Honda had a tough time motivating himself at the beginning of the season but then got into the groove. After this win he's all set for his sixth title and promised his fans to really work hard at it next year. A repeat performance, shall we say?





THE GOLDEN OLD ES Five great players noted for their distinctive style and never-say-die spirit retired after France '98

BY NOVY KAPADIA

remember 1998 as a year of epochal changes in world football. In the last World Cup of the 20th century, France broke the monopoly of the six previous winners and won for the first time. The father figure of FIFA, Joao Havelange at last retired and was replaced by Sepp Blatter who

Carlos Valderrama (10): his unique playing style will be sorely missed

prevailed over the UEFA's candidate Lennart Johannson in an acrimonious election at Paris. Rich European clubs threatened to break away from their parent body UEFA and form a breakaway super league proposed by Media Partners However, after much negotiations, the rich clubs of Europe, dubbed the G-14 reached a

dubbed the G-14 reached a compromise with the UEFA and endorsed plans for a new 32 team Champions' League. Media baron Rupert Murdoch's take over of one of the popular clubs in the world, Manchester United is a further

indication of the growing power and might of satellite TV.

Above all, 1998 will be remembered for the end of an era of several stalwart players, Dunga, Brazil's dynamic defensive midfielder and skipper, the cultured Columbian midfielder Carlos Valderrama, the phlegmatic Brazilian custodian Claudio Taffarel, the lively and cerebral German skipper Jurgen Klinsmann and the bustling Bulgarian forward Hristo Stoitchkov. They were not only great players but great personalities noted for their distinctive style and never-say-die spirit. Their retirement is the end of an era, a page of history has turned for ever

CARLOS VALDERRAMA: Columbia's most capped player has a distinctive hair style and playing style. His flaming orange and grizzly hair style makes him stand out on any field. He has a seemingly casual style and never appears to use up much energy. However such is his speed of thought that he is at the right place at the right time. His movements are deceptive. His imperial presence, vision and ability in midfield will be sorely missed not only by Columbia but by football lovers all over the world.

Overall, the 36-year-old Valderrama has played 108 matches for his country and scored 10 goals. He was Columbia's captain at France '98. Valderrama became the 34th member of the 100 club, namely players who have appeared 100 times or over for their national team. This colourful midfielder reached this milestone in a long international career which



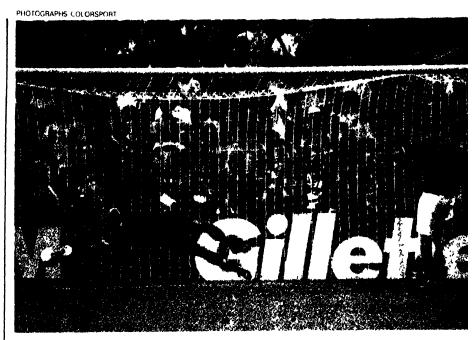
stretches to 12 years.

He made his international debut on October 27, 1985 in an away World Cup qualifying tie in Paraguay which his team lost 0-3. His 100th cap came on August 6, 1997 when Columbia surprisingly lost 0-1 to Jamaica. He is Columbia's most capped player and has created a record by playing in five successive South American championships, the biennial Copa America from 1987 to 1995. He missed the 1997 Copa America because he was resting for the more important World Cup qualifying games being played at virtually the same time.

His record is impressive. He has played in three successive World Cups and has never missed a match in the final rounds. Born in Santa Marta on September 2, 1991 Valderrama started his professional career with Santa Marta. He has also played for Millonarios, Atletico Nacional and moved abroad to France to represent Montpellier and then moved to Real Valladoid of Spain. After his spell in Europe he returned to Columbia and opted for Atletico Nacional, then shifted to Medellin and finally to Atletico Junior. He had a brief stint with Tanipa Bay Mutiny in the US Major League but returned on loan to Atletico Junior of Barranquilla.

Valderrama has retired from international football but says he will continue playing for his Columbian club for another two years.
Valderrama used to strut about the field like a born leader and playmaker. His main attributes were outstanding ball control, vision and ability to read a game. He has never got overawed by the occasion and plays better in big matches. Age has slowed his mobility but his passing and presence at France '98 commanded respect.

claudio taffarel. In the Final against France, Taffarel won his 99th cap for Brazil the best-ever sequence by a Brazilian goalkeeper. Overall, he has been the first choice goalkeeper for Brazil in three World Cups, starting in Italia '90. When Taffarel appeared in the 1998 World Cup



Claudio Taffarel: judgement, calm presence and safe collection were his forte

Cup match, equalling the German Sepp Maier's record for goalkeeping appearances in the Finals. Taffarel has not officially announced his international retirement as he hopes to get his 100th cap. However, Wanderley Luxembergo, the current Brazilian coach, thinks he is over the hill and is unlikely to call him up for one more sentimental appearance. Thus the official international retirement is expected soon.

His calm presence in the Brazilian goal will be missed. This 1.80 metres tall goalkeeper who weighs 80 kgs is not a flamboyant—custodian. He relies on instinct and knowledge of his opponents to decide which way to dive in a penalty shoot-out. Taffarel, who first came into the limelight in the 1988 Seoul Olympics (Brazil lost in the final to erstwhile USSR) is not oustanding at any one facet of goalkeeping. However he is efficient in many aspects, such as judgement, calm presence and safe collection of crosses.

In Brazil where forwards and midfielders are idolised, youngsters rarely want to play as goalkeepers. Taffarel was an exception and played as a goalkeeper since his youth. He is the only Brazilian goalkeeper to achieve heroic status by his

Rose Bowl Pasedena, USA in the 1994 World Cup Final and against Holland in the semi-finals of the 1998 World Cup. His consistency was rewarded when the Brazilian President Cardoso described him as a national hero for his role in the semi-final win over the Dutch team.

At present, he is playing club football for Galatasaray in Turkey. Born on May 8, 1966 in Crissiunal at Rio Grande he started his career with International and then moved to Parma and Reggians of Italy and then returned to the Brazilian club Atletico Mineiro. Brazil will miss this balding goalkeeper and his rare ability to handle pressure in any crises.

JURGEN KLINSMANN. The intelligent Klinsmann will be missed not only as a footballer but also as an unique individual. He has played 108 internationals for his country and scored 47 goals. In Germany, he is a living legend for his commitment to the national cause and social activism.

At France '98, he played in his third successive World Cup. His game is based on speed, clinical finishing, non-stop mobility and fearless running. Klinsmann was a very intelligent player, whose main attributes were an ability to drift into space, receive a pass and turn quickly to shake off a defender. Above all, he is



Jurgen Klinsmann: a living legend for his commitment to the national cause and social activism

a very competitive player, commanding in the air and effective with both feet.

During his career, he overcame adversity on several occasions by his sound temperament. He was injured for the semi-finals of Euro '96 and was barely able to hobble. Still he recovered to play in the final and led his team to victory. Prior to the 1998 World Cup, he lost his goal-scoring touch and coach Bertie Vogts thought of dropping him from the national side. However he regained his composure as a striker during the World Cup and scored three vital goals against Iran, USA and Me> ico. German fans will always cherish the memory of his heroic display in the 1990 World Cup against Holland.

In that pre-quarter final tie, Germany was reduced to ten men, as co-striker Rudi Voller was sent off the field for a clash with Holland's Frank Rijkaard. Such was his commitment, work rate and running off the ball that he harassed the Dutch defence into suspicion and error. He performed the role of two players and helped Germany win 2-1. In full cry his sheer athleticism and determination helped him to score unbelievable goals.

Amongst international sportspersons he is a rare social activist. Klinsmann supports the Greens Party and is very keen on several ecological issues. He spends a lot of time in charitable works, raised funds for victims of an earthquake in Iran in 1990, worked with deprived children, orphans and war ravaged children. Such charitable acts have been highly commended and he will be remembered as the perfect

ambassador for his sport.

Twice German Footballer of the Year (1988 and 1994) and England's Player of the Year in 1995, he has played football in four countries, Germany for Rayern Munich, in Italy for Inter Milan and Sampadoria, in England for Tottenham Hotspur and in France for Monaco. After his retirement, he will spend more time in charitable causes.

DUNGA: The human dynamo, Dunga was an inspirational captain for Brazil. He retired after the World Cup Final loss to hosts France having played 90 matches and scoring six goals. His ability to organise the team

Dunga had the ability to cajole or inspire his players to keep performing even when down in the dumos



in front of the back four will be sorely missed. Dunga will never be forgotten for his ability to ensure that the talented but temperamental Brazilians never lost their shape. His biting tackles, anticipation and sensible passing were not spectacular but very effective.

He had the never-say-die spirit and ability to cajole or inspire his players to keep performing even when down in the dumps. Dunga was never a player with exceptional technical skills. He compensated by improving his distribution and work rate. Also he had exceptional positional sense and could effectively mop up in front of the back four. At France '98, he frequently chided stars like Roberto Carlos and Rivaldo for careless passes or lack of concentration. He also





guided younger players like Denilson and Junior Baiano. Brazil will miss his inspirational and combative presence in midfield. Dunga played club football in Germany and Japan.

HRISTO STOITCHKOV: The bustling, 32-year-old Bulgarian striker with a lethal left foot has retired after an illustrious international career. He played in 74 matches and scored 36 goals for his country. The hallmark of his career was at the 1994 World Cup in USA, in which Bulgaria finished third. He emerged as the joint top scorer of the 1994 World Cup with six goals.

His explosive skills, unrelenting pace and sheer combativeness will be sorely missed. Stoitchkov was always an entertaining player, who liked to run at defences. His close control, good dribbling skills and powerful left-footed shots always made him an exciting player to watch whether for Bulgaria or for his club sides Barcelona and C.SKA Sofia.

He started his career with CSKA Sofia and then moved to Barcelona of Spain where along with Romario he formed a superlative attacking duo.

Hristo Stoitchkov: Bulgaria will miss him badly

He next moved to Parma of Italy but soon returned to Barcelona. He also played a few matches for Al Nasr of Saudi Arabia just before the 1998 World Cup and scored the winning goal, which enabled them to win the Asian Cup Winners' Cup.

A very competitive player, he was known for needling opponents and the referee This led to frequent bookings but he had the ability to bounce back when written off. His clashes with national coach Hristo Bonev are also legendary but he always played his heart out for his country which endeared him to the fans.

However, his combative style and speed made him a delight to watch. Bulgaria will be weak without his presence. He was European footballer of the Year and Bulgarian Sportsman of the Year in 1994. That same year he won a Spanish league championship medal with Barcelona and finished runners-up in The European. Champions Cup against A.C.Milan

BY SHEVLIN SEBASTIAN

T was an athletics fan Manik Das who summed up the situation best: "Yesterday, Paramjit Singh was quietly sitting on the grass with his fellow athletes and nobody disturbed him. Today, he is telling people 'Can I talk to you later?'"

In Calcutta, after his record-setting feat, (45.70 secs), Paramjit Singh was besieged by fans, by TV crews, by print journalists and fellow athletes and coaches. It's not every day that a 38-year-old record is shattered. (Poor Milkha Singh. The decades of crowing is over. Rightfully, it's time for him to fade into the history books.)

But Paramjit Singh has been upset by Milkha Singh's reaction. The latter claimed that because of the change of timing, (hand-held timing: 45.6, which was changed to 45.73 electronic by the International Amateur Athletics Federation), his record has not been broken.

"I cannot understand why Milkha Sirigh is saying this," Paramjit Singh said, with a trace of irritation in his voice, "the IAAF has fixed the record at 45.73 and I broke that. This is an insult to me.

"I also cannot understand why he has changed the amount of prize money he was planning to give. Earlier, he had said that he would give Rs. 2 lakhs to anybody who will break the record. Now, he says that he will give Rs. 1 lakh and one lakh after my performance in the Bangkok Asian Games. He should have kept his word.

"I remember in 1991, he had made a statement saying that 'there is nobody born in India now, who can break my record.' Well, I have been able to prove him wrong."

What about his coach Harbans

PARAMJIT SINGH shatters Milkha Singh's 38-year-old record in the 400m





Singh? It does seem that he is a case of revenge being a dish that tastes best when it is cold

"Many years ago the coach recollected, wiping tears from his eyes 'I had applied for a job in the Punjab Sports Ministry and Milkha Singh had rejected my application Ever since that time it had my dream to produce an athlete who could break Milkha's Rome Olympic record I am happy that I have realised my dream '

The boyish-looking Paramit Singh is 6 2" tall, with a lithe frame. He runs strongly but he conveys an ease of movement, reminiscent of the great P

(Left) Paramit Singh on his way to setting a new national mark in the 400m (Above) The triumphant Railway 4 x 400m relay team which re-wrote the national mark (From left) Lijo David, Ramchandran, Jata Shankar and Paramit Singh

T Usha He seems to have a genuine natural talent. Now whether he can transform this ability into an Asian level performance is yet to be seen

Here s a look at his background

He was born 26 summers ago in the village of Nainowalljattam in Hoshiarpur district in the Punjab His father Kripal Singh worked in the Air Force while his mother Amrik Kaur was a housewife The father played recreational volleyball Son Paramit started with kho-kho and football then moved to volleyball and played for the State when he was in class nine. In class ten, he took part in the triple jump and impressed the local coaches. He was admitted into the nearby Tanda Urmur Sports. School where SAI coach Harjit Singh suggested that he switch to the 400m because he was tall.

He showed potential and at the age of 18 he was employed by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) as a Head Constable in 1992. It was only in 1994 that he made an impact on the national stage. He took part in the '94 All India Police Meet at Jaipur and won both the 200m and 400m gold medals. Harbans Singh took over as coach now, and Paramjit continued to improve steadily. He was picked for the national camp for the Asian Games in 94.

Subsequently, he was selected to represent India at Hiroshima in the 4 x 400m relay team India came fifth His

BARRIER

Has The Record Actually Been Broken?

Lat the Salt Lake Stadium, a day after Paramjit Singh broke the record. Several athletes in off-the-record conversations stated with the utmost conviction that the timer was deliberately stopped, before the race was over.

"He did not break the record," they said with emphasis, "but you can't quote me on it."

"How can you prove it?" I ask.
"That is for you to investigate,"
they said.

It's difficult to prove this allegation, especially if the cover-up, as it has been insinuated, has been done at the highest level. Were these charges motivated by jealousy? by a sense of vindictiveness? One cannot say, for sure.

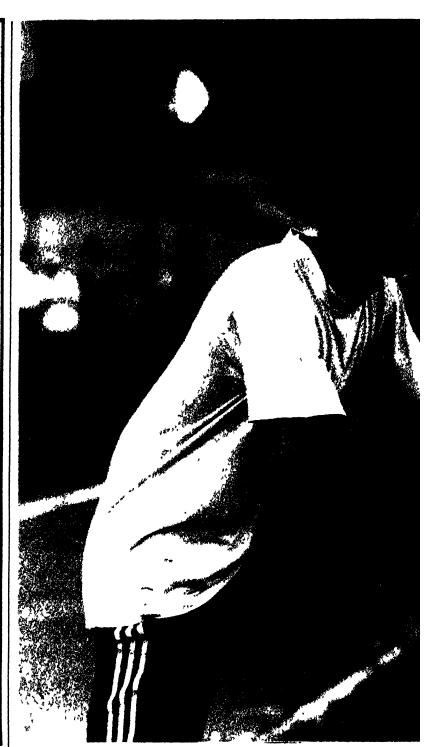
One interesting point was that Paramjit Singh never radiated the thrill and excitement that most athletes show when they break a record that has stood as long as this one. He looked absolutely calm, almost detached, like this was just another day at the office.

Anyway, all one can say it is that now up to Paramjit Singh to squash these rumours by consistently going below Milkha Singh's timing of 45.73 secs whenever he runs.

That is the only way he can silence his critics.

next international meet was the SAF Games at Chennal where he won the silver medal with appersonal best time of 46.33 secs. He also took part in the '95 World Police Games in Melbourne where he won the 200 and 400m gold.

"It was at the SAF Games in 1995," said Paramjit Singh, "that a lot of



Paramjit Singh having a chet with fellow athlete Sunita Rani

athletes told me that I had the talent to break Milkha Singh's record."

The idea began to crystallise in his mind. His coach also egged him on.

"I instilled in him the desire to beat Milkha Singh's mark," Harbans Singh stated, stroking his salt-and-pepper beard, "it wasn't an easy task. It's not mornings and go for practice. Anthen you have to come back in the afternoon and do more of the san You have to do this for months ar years together. It needs a great de dedication, consistency and sacrif You also have to cope with a lot o setbacks."



came in 1996 when, a day prior to the Olympic Trials, out of sheer tension, he had diarrhoea. He became so weak that he could not participate in the Trials and missed the chance to go for the Olympic Games. It was a confidence-shattering episode for him. "After months of training," recalled Paramjit Singh, "to lose out at

the final hurdle was too disappointing. I know that I missed a great opportunity to test myself at the Olympics. I feel that if I had gone, I would have knocked off Milkha Singh's mark at Atlanta itself."

"I had a difficult time to make him see hope again," added Harbans Singh. In 1997, a motorcycle accident at Patiala resulted in a fractured wrist and he was out of action for months together. But now, this year, having trained assiduously, he has achieved Indian athletics immortality.

In his personal life, by 1996, he fell in love with E.B. Shyla, a 100m runner who works for the Food Corporation of India and is from Shimoga in Karnataka. They are planning to get married in January. Shyla is a confident girl, talks fluent English and was dressed smartly in a white t-shirt tucked into purple track pants and blue sneakers.

As a trio of journalists accompanied Paramjit towards the SAI canteen, on the last evening of the Open Nationals, Shyla caught up with the group and asked her fiance whether he was coming along with her. He said, "No time."

"Yes," she replied, in a faintly sarcastic tone, "now you won't have any time."

I got the feeling that once the scribes left and he went to see her, she would say, "I thought that you said you had no time for me. Then how come you have come now?"

And, as it has happened for thousands of years, the man would go down on his knees, record-holder or not, and beg for forgiveness.

We sat around a table, sipping from bottles of 'Miranda' and I asked Paramjit, "What are the qualities that attracted you to Shyla in the first place?"

"She is a very simple girl," he replied, with a shy grin, "she is very natural and she always listens to me That is what I like the most about her." Interestingly, she said the same thing about him. Likes attract, I suppose.

So, Paramjit Singh is on a roll. A 38-year-old record has been shattered. He is going to get married soon and his boss in the CRPF told him over the phone that he would soon be promoted to the post of Deputy Superintendent of Police soon.

What more could a man ask?
Perhaps, a little bit of metal from the
Asian Games, for a start. ●

SHARP SHOOTER

JASPAL RANA talks about the difficulties of a shooting career in India and bemoans the fact that cricket is hogging all the attention

INTERVIEWED BY ANIRBAN SIRCAR, KUALA LUMPUR

IF anyone deserves accolades for representing the nation then it has to be the amazing Indian shooter Jaspal Rana The handsome 22 year old once again delivered the goods by striking two golds and two silvers in his favourit centre fire pistol and air pistol individual and team events at the 16th Commonwealth Games in Malaysia

One of the youngest top class shooters in the world Rana has also struck gold in the Asian Games and the 1994 Commonwealth Games The charming young man is from Uttarkashi in the Garhwal Himalayas of Uttar Pradesh

Here are excerpts from the interview

How does it feel to be carrying the national flag in such events as the Asian Games and the Commonwealth Games?

I cannot really express my feelings I just feel very proud and honoured because I have been chosen from so many others to lead our contingent at the march past ceremonies of international events such as the Asian and Comn onwealth Games

What kind of financial support are you getting as a shooter in

Well I have been wry fortunate that

JCT Mills has been there for me all the time and I am sure that they will continue to support me

Are you satisfied with the assistance that you are getting, be it from the corporate sector or



rom the government?

am satisfied with myself because in ndia you have to do things on your own. I do not expect somebody to ome and help me out because you are responsible for yourself and you annot change the system. I believe hat the sports budget of Oxford University is greater than that of our government. That best explains the ituation.

What drives you to achieve gold or India?

get my drive from the immense hard work that I put into my practice essions. I do not set unrealistic target cores for myself. I just think about schieving and improving on my raining sessions and scores in the

ANIRBAN SIRCAR

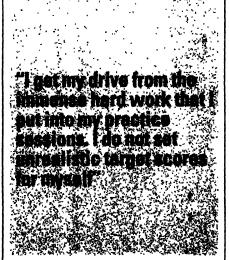
trials and earlier matches.

What has been your greatest achievement thus far in your shooting career?

When I won the 1994 World Junior Shooting Championships in Milano, Italy. I got a world record score that still stands. At that time I had a knee injury and the doctor said that I would not be able to shoot and in fact I had to get my knee operated later that year. The fact that I won the title even after my knee got worse the night before really made me happy.

What are the attributes of a world-class shooter?

It is a question of getting the basics right. When you learn a language, you



do not start spelling words or reading novels straightaway. You start with alphabets. The same principle applies in any sport, including shooting. The person who knows his basics well, is the best.

Why do you think that cricket is given too much focus over other sports in India?

Well the media has to be blamed for this. Yes, cricket is the largest spectator sport in India, but it is not even featured in the Olympic Games. So, for an Olympic medal we would have to turn to shooting, hockey or tennis.

It is good that, at least, there is one sport in India that is getting attention, but why to such a large extent. After all, half of the Asian countries neither like cricket, nor do they want to know about the game. Why is half of the money spent on cricket not diverted to other sports in our country?

What would you like to see the government do for shooting in India?

First and foremost, we need modern equipments. There should be a proper policy in place so that shooters do not have to worry about their bread and butter. It would seriously jeorpardise their performances if things are not set right through a proper system.

We have a legislation whereby only the ten best shooters in the country can get an import licence for pistols and rifles. But how do you come in the best ten without proper weapons. This policy inconveniences a lot of budding shooters and in turn makes it difficult for new talents to emerge.

Who inspired you to become a shooter?

Well, my father was a shooting instructor with the elite Special Protection Group (SPG). I used to go with him to watch the commandos train. I started shooting with him and then gradually he started to give me serious coaching lessons, including yoga classes. That helped me a lot. Now even my brother and sister, Sushma are also international shooters.

What is your vision about the future of shooting in India?

If I had the power and the resources, I would definitely love to build a big shooting range in each and every state in India. I would like to see more shooting schools. In fact, I have got land in Mussourie to establish a shooting academy.

The inconsistent policy on the import of air pistols also needs to be reviewed. You see, it is all right if someone brings in an air pistol in his baggage, but it is banned to 'legally' import such a weapon. Again, while the country expects us to win medals, the concerned authorities suspect us of supplying arms to the terrorists. If such is the case, then they should ask us to stop shooting in India altogether.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

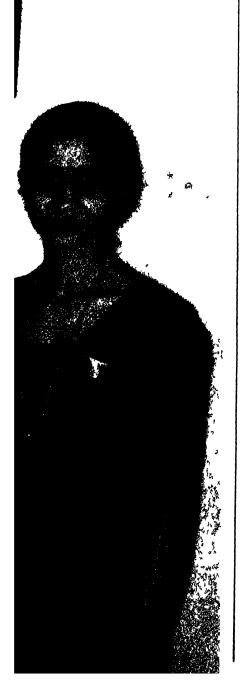
M. P. GANESH

Meet the former hockey Olympian who played in the right extreme position



BY AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

IFE is busy as a bee these days for the distinguished hockey Olympian M P Ganesh, who is the executive director of the well-established Sports Authority of India southern centre on the outskirts of Bangalore Conditioning classes for the SAI staffers are



scheduled thrice a week and Ganesh takes part with his colleagues in jogging and playing games like football

On other days, Ganesh, who keeps himself fit doing some strengthening exercises at the small gym he has, can be seen playing golf on the nine-hole course which he was instrumental in constructing inside the tailor-made complex spread across 82 acres. A visit with his wife to the temple located inside the campus a few metres away from his quarters is followed by his routine and hectic office work.

The southern centre caters to the needs of four states (Andhra Pradesh Karnataka Kerala Famil Nadu and two union territories (Pondicherry and I akshadweep). This centre has 22 sub-centres where hostel facilities exist. Besides the orderly visits to places within his jurisdiction like helping the state governments with financial assistance for various schemes and dealing with all the central government schemes. Ganesh is busy on tours for 6-10 days in a month attending meetings in Delhi and Patiala

National campers are often seen at this centre and Ganesh has to ensure that there is a proper coordination among three groups of people like administration scientific and coaching staff in order to help these sports persons. Excellent schemes in hockey volleyball and weightlifting also exist and there are also various diploma and master graduation courses.

Many state associations do seek SAI help regarding camps and coaches Besides monitoring the work of around 340 coaches deployed at SAI and helping them out, Ganesh also conducts the periodical refresher courses for them to update their knowledge. Testing their physical and mental fitness also forms part of the former Olympian's work area

The 52-year-old Coorgi, who represented India in hockey between

The Ganeshs in their typical, traditional and ethnic Kodara attire. The couple are lonely and sad since the unfathomable loss of their only son Aiyappa (centre).



Plays golf on the 9-hole course inside the SAI complex

1960-74 in all the international tournaments and played more than 100 matches believes in helping sportspersons to perform better than him by providing them with better facilities. 'That's why I ve taken up this tough task... he swears

Decades ago Ganesh only knew how to handle a hockey stick. But the former right extreme and also centre forward who now goes home for lunch for half an hour before resuming his afternoon duties which include rounds to the various sites, has more than understood his job

Sports administration is not like any other administration explains Ganesh. Here we cannot have red tapism. Such of those staff members who have not played sports at all need to be convinced as far as the requirements of sportspersons and their needs are concerned. Someone working in the sports department without any sports background makes a lot of difference. Their attitude need to be gradually changed. Though I'm busy with all this, I'm

enjoying my work," stated the 1973 Arjuna awardee

Ganesh is also aware of the fact that in administration one cannot keep everybody happy. He says my aim is not to satisfy each and everybody. But to see that the sportspersons are benefitted. For this, we have to encourage coaches and scientists which unfortunately is not happening in our country.

It was thanks to the former Chief Minister of Karnataka R Gundu Rao that Ganesh could take up sports administration. He drifted to coaching in 1978 after playing and coaching the leading club of Italy, I evante Insurance Company between 1974 77 NIS, Patiala, posted him to the Sree Kanteerava Stadium Bangalore, as head of the department

This is how Ganesh relaxes with wife Prema every evening at home, watching TV

of hockey a post he served for three years. During one of the inter-state meets, Ganesh was invited as the chief guest to present medals. Sports and Youth Services Minister Gundu Rao who knew him well happened to be there and offered him a state government post asking him to work for the promotion of sports in Karnataka. Ganesh then worked as a Special Officer (Sports) in the Youth Services Department on a contract basis for a monthly salary of Rs. 1500.

In 1986 SAI director general Narender Singh on seeing Ganesh's work offered him a deputy director (coaching) post in Delhi which he readily accepted as it provided him not only the job security but also an opportunity to contribute more to the sport. The motive was the same but a vast area was given to me to serve sports if recalls Ganesh.

Meanwhile Ganesh was also

selected for an interview for the post of director at the NIS, Patiala for which he had applied before. Having joined SAI just then, he took prior permission to appear for the interview and earned the post of director, regional centre. Imphal, where he worked for two years

In 1987, Ganesh s services were sought by the government and the Indian Hockey Federation as the national team coach. Ganesh was a national coach with total powers of handling the team. Under him India finished second in the Seoul Olympics in 1988 and went on to finish a poor 10th in the 1990 Lahore World Cup.

The reasons for the poor show in Pakistan We were kept like prisoners in a star hotel. We could not even go out to practice and not even allowed to watch other teams play. We were allowed to go out only to play our matches that too amidst.



disturbances. The director of the tournament even asked me to take the team back which I did not do. Being confined in the hotel the players put on a lot of weight, were getting lots of threatening calls and therefore did not do well."

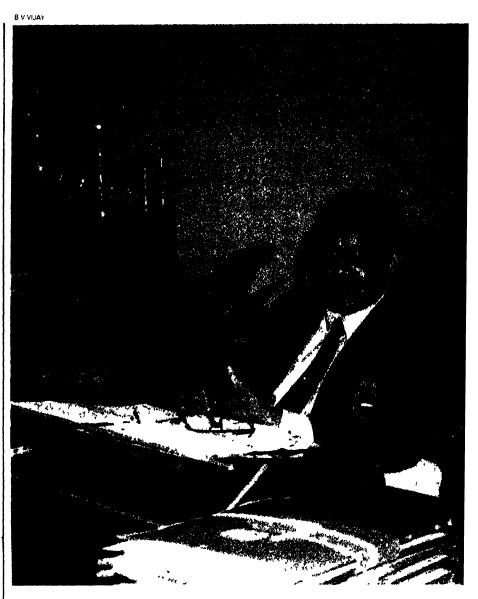
Thus Ganesh had to quit coaching as he soon realised, "even coaching is very difficult in this country unless and until the total administration is with you. It was then very difficult to work with the federation as we had a lot of problems regarding planning, coaching and kitting. The boys were not looked after properly.

"When we played for the country we taced a lot of problems. Now also the scene is no different Sportspersons are not happy in this country and not looked after well unlike the European countries or Australia," opines Ganesh. So, thoughts of 'helping a sportsperson could be done by being in the administration' naturally occupied Ganesh's mind and he went back to SAI, Delhi, as director (coaching) a year before getting promotion as regional director of the southern centre in 1991

Commenting on what's lacking in Indian hockey, Ganesh blames the system existing in our country. "Today in India, we've sufficient talent. But its not tapped and trained in a systematic way. Maybe the inefficiency of our sports administration, maybe the federations, maybe the associations. The systematic and sincere efforts are missing."

"To give an example," Ganesh continues, "when I was playing for the country in the right extreme position, we had seven right extremes. My position was seventh when I got into the national camp. Today, you take the national team. Mukesh is world class. Dhanraj Pillay is world class. But where are the second, third and fourth Dhanrajs? Which means, we have failed somewhere in our planning.

"Ajitpal Singh played 10 years for the country and was the best in the



The Executive Director in his office

world. After his retirement we could not produce another Ajitpal. Today when the time has come for both our goalkeepers Ashish Ballal and A.B. Subbaiah who have been around for the last 10-12 years to retire, none of the goalkeepers are ready to replace them," notes Ganesh.

The Ganeshs have been married for more than two decades now. A Miss Prema being an ardent hockey fan used to collect paper clippings/photographs of B.P.Govinda and Ganesh before being Mrs Ganesh in an arranged marriage. But they are lonely and sad. A little more than a year ago, the Ganeshs lost their only child, Aiyappa.

The couple had nurtured him for 19 long years before a genetic killer-disease, Myopathy which causes muscle disorder and was visible in him at the age of eight, snatched him away.

Mrs Ganesh, in her son's death, is finding life very difficult these days to pull on. "Fortunately, I love reading books and that keeps me going," she says, while Ganesh makes it a point to devote most of his free time to her. In the evenings, sitting next to her and watching TV is his best way of relaxation. Otherwise, the Ganeshs do go out to watch some evening matches in the city or visit friends. And prefer to visit their coffee estate in Konanakatte near Gonikoppa in Coorg in the weekends to find peace.

THE BURN-OUT KID

At 22, Yevgeny Kafelnikov was being hailed as the next tennis superstar. Two years down the line Kafelnikov is disenchanted and disillusioned with the game. What went wrong?

INTERVIEWED BY PAUL FEIN

N his acclaimed history book Sporting Gentlemen, E. Digby Baltzell painted a bleak picture of "the final triumph of the computerised one-dimensional man in the deadly serious tennis business....Today's well-behaved automatons, in the third progeneration, have apparently had little education or fun in the process of their being programmed, almost from their cradles, to make money out of tennis."

No current player epitomizes this lost sense of fun and joy in competing more than Yevgeny Kafelnikov these days. Only two years ago, the then-22-year-old Russian with the rock-solid strokes, ideal physique and abundant talent captured the French Open singles and doubles titles. Displaying an all-court game that excelled on every surface, Kafelnikov today seems plagued by depression, discouragement and disillusionment.

What went wrong? During the Great American Insurance ATP Championships in Cincinnati, Kafelnikov forthrightly talked about success, wealth, fame and the troubles they have brought him.

After you won the 1996 French Open, after losing only one set, you said, "It was just a dream. I never felt I could do it, winning a Grand Slam at age 22." Why were you so surprised?

Because I mever had much success on clay before that. So I never thought I could win seven matches in a row which were all best-of-five sets. I got lucky in the early stages of the tournament, and I won it.

Now that you have won a Slam singles title and three Slam doubles titles, what are your new tennis dreams?

No dreams. No more dreams. I already have everything I wanted to achieve. I won a Grand Slam, I was in the Top 10 for the last three years. I'm happy with the things I've done so far. I'll try to play as long as I can. That's the only goal I have right now. I have no more spectacular goals any more.

You've called Anatoly Lepeshin "the coach who believed in me when nobody else did." Why did only he have confidence in you? I guess it worked both ways. I believed in him because I knew he was a strong person. I knew he could show me the way to the top, and he did that successfully. He's been my coach for the last six years. I know that no other coach could have done this for me. He showed he's a terrific coach, not just on paper, but he proved it.

In 1994 you said, "The Top 10 guys are really working hard. I'm the kind of guy who likes to stay in bed until 10 o'clock. I think I have no ambition." Do you now have the hunger and drive to win more major titles and become No.1?

Not anymore. It's way beyond my

Yevgeny Kafelnikov is a troubled man these days and tennis does not seem to excite him any more



ability For a little while I did believe I could get there but it's in the past

But I think you have a lot of ability. That's what everyone says But I guess they're wrong

Although Russia has never won the Davis Cup, you led your country to the final in 1994 and 1995. With Marat Safin rapidly improving, what are the chances Russia will win its first Davis Cup during your pro career? Very little The chances are not so big as everyone thinks Deep inside, I feel there are a lot of other teams way better than Russia. It was just a surprise success against the United States (narrowly losing 3-2 in April.) No one thought we would beat them We were underdogs and that s why we played so loose. Even though I beat Courier and Agassi. It doesn't mean well perform that way the next time we play the Davis Cup.

But Safin may improve a lot more

in the next year or two.

Yes he will He s going to be near the top in a short time but I might be on my way down already

You have a terrific 21-5 Davis Cup singles record. How much does your personal Davis Cup singles success mean to you?

It since It since to keep it in the record books. It sahell of a good effort

You're not playing for yourself, you're playing for your country.



Even with a solid all-court game, Kafelnikov just cannot get it going these days, and he himself cannot fathom why

So it's a big honour. I m very proud of it

have some other expensive sports cars and are unbelievably wealthy compared to the average Russian. Do Russians admire and love you for your tennis heroics? Or are they jealous of your wealth? Let me tell you, first of all, I got rid of the Ferrari a long time ago. I don't drive it anymore. And second of all, I don't give a God-damn shit what the other fellows think of me. I'm a young person with a lot of money, and I just do what I want to I don't think anybody is jealous of me. They just don't understand me. I'm not the same person I was three years ago

How are you different?

Because I am older, more experienced I know about life much more than I did three years ago So I'm not making the same mistakes I did then That makes me feel better about myself

What mistakes did you make three years ago?

I'm not going to tell you We're not going to go through it

Were you too materialistic?

No, no I was never concerned about that I played because I liked the game, not because of the other benefits from playing tennis. It wasn't the money or the fame, it was because I liked the game I still love the game I like to play and I like to compete. It keeps me going

Are you a national hero like Sergei Federov or other Russian sports superstars?

I don't want to be like that

Why not?

Because you realise it's nothing. It doesn't mean anything to be a national hero. Other stars who have done much more than me deserve it 52





much more Another side is the lack of privacy. It makes me feel so unhappy sometimes.

In May 1995 you said: "I am the last of the line. We don't have a younger generation. All the coaches have left to go elsewhere. Nobody in tennis wants to stay here since the breakdown of the old Soviet system. It's really a bad thing. So I know I have an even greater responsibility." Have you changed your mind about Russia not having a younger generation?

I miglad that we have Marat now He can step up and take my place very successfully because he sia good kid and he sigoing to be very good. There is hope. I m not going to feel so much under pressure anymore. Whenever I want to quit the pio sport. I ll do it. If nothing motivates me anymore and if I have no joy on the tennis court. I ll be gone. I definitely don't feel I have to stay anymore just for my country.

You have commented that you would not have developed into a Top 5 star if the old Soviet Union and Communism had not crumbled. Why not?

Good question I did make that comment I wish I knew the answer I might have broken into the Top 5 with the old Soviet regime but who knows? I don't have the answer, but you don't know it either. Nobody knows

Yury Aivazyan, head of Moscow's Tennis Academy has said:
"Everyone is getting into tennis. It is very popular with a certain stratum of society." Is there a tennis boom in Russia? Or is tennis too expensive for the masses?

The boom is already gone. But there are still a lot of parents bringing the kids to the tennis courts. I guess I am still a role model for some of them.

—which is a good thing for me someone that they can pretend to be Tennis is still big but not as big as it was two years ago. I have no idea why that is I wish I knew the answer

This year you revealed: "I tell you there were moments when I thought: That's enough. I want to quit!" Why did you think about quitting the pro tour?

A lot of things came up together. I just want to keep it private. I don't want anybody to know why and how. It's completely private.

Otto Tamesvari, the father-coach of Andrea, a Top 10 player in the 1980s, once said: "Tennis is a cruel sport." Do you agree?

Yes Tagree Tennis is a very physical sport. To be on the top level to be a Top 10 player, you have to be very fit physically. And you must not have any weaknesses in your game nowhere. You have to be perfect!

Right now, nothing needs improving. The only thing for me to improve is my desire. I'm very optimal on the tennis court. I don't need to learn how to hit backhands, how to hit forehands, how to volley, how to serve...

But you have such a good all-court game that should be good on hardcourts.

You see there are a lot of buts But but but I m telling you I m not the favourite!

In March 1997 Pete Sampras said: "Kafelnikov is probably the most solid of everyone. Through time he could be No.1 one day." In the past 18 months—aside from your broken finger—what has kept you from challenging Sampras for the No.1 spot?

There are a lot of other guys v ho want to take his No 1 spot, too Maybe when he s retired I might consider again and have another goal of being No 1 in the world Sampras is way above everyone else. It s like when

Gomez won the French Open Everyone asked him why he didn't win it before. And Gomez said before that Lendl was always killing him

You have also said, "I want to be able to tell my children, 'Your father was No.1'.".

Being No.1 in the world was always my second goal. My first goal was always to win any of the Grand Slams. To my credit, I achieved that. I won the French Open, and no one can take that away from me. I guess Sampras would trade three Wimbledons for having one French Open to his credit.

You've indicated you would like to be the Top 10 representative on the ATP Tour Player Council. What issues and politics do you feel strongly about?

That's a good question. There are too many tournaments Personally, I feel I should play less tournaments. That's one issue I want to discuss. So many things have to be done differently to have more success Perhaps a bigger off-season. There has to be less tournaments. I'm against on-court coaching I have always believed two players go on the court (to compete), and two players go off the court. It has to stay that way.

Two years ago you were one of the favourites to win the U.S.Open. Yet you withdrew in protest when the USTA messed around with the seedings and improperly re-made the draw. Please tell me about that unfortunate episode. I remember that. The week before I had a minor injury on my lower back. The rehabilitation period was going pretty well, and all the doctors said I was ready to play. The way they did the seedings was unfair to me and everybody. I was the only one who withdrew because of it.

You also deserve praise for being one of the few Top 20 players who regularly enters both singles and doubles. Why do you play doubles?

I always play doubles because it helps

improve my singles by keeping my confidence at a high level. When I'm out of the singles in the early rounds, I often play doubles successfully until the end of the tournament.

Statistically, my early losses in singles are very low (infrequent) because I was able to play confidently and not have long gaps of time when I wasn't playing matches at all.

While you were recovering from your broken finger, you learned how to fly a single-engine aircraft. Please tell me about that.

It was a very nice experience. After I retire from my tennis career, I will definitely do that. It's exciting, a big adventure. It's dangerous But I'm a gambler. I like to take myself to extremes.

Do you plan to buy your own airplane, like Agassi?

There is a chance I will.

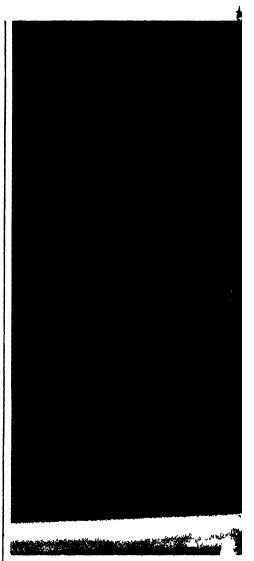
Has the biggest problem you faced in your career been the great expectations people have of you—which created a lot of pressure?

No. I never felt pressure from anybody but myself. My parents have always been nice to me. They have let me alone. They have never been involved in my professional career.

You had confided: "When I was 20, everyone was saying I could be No.1 in the world, but I was too young then. I'm older and wiser now, and I know there is a lot of room for improving my game." Which areas need improving?

Right now, nothing needs improving. The only thing for me to improve is my desire. I'm very optimal on the tennis court. I don't need to learn how to hit backhands, how to hit forehands, how to volley, how to serve. I know everything. The problem is, some days I don't have the energy to play.

How would you describe your relationship with the Russian media? Have they been fair to you?



Even though Kafelnikov's ATP performances are not all that hot, he has an incredible win-record in the Davis Cup when he plays for Russia

I've had some problems in the past. It seems to me that right now everything is going smoothly.

How did the Russian media react when you became the first Russian to win a Grand Slam singles title?

I don't really remember because it's in the past. And I'm not the kind of person who likes to look back at the past. The past is gone. We have got to look at the future.

Goran Ivanisevic recently remarked: "I don't think we have personalities in the (men's) game



anymore." What can men's tennis and its stars do to make it more entertaining?

(Sigh) I guess we have to change everything completely. Like the way the tour is going right now.
Everything. The schedule.
Everything! I don't really know how we can make the players more colourful. All the top guys are wealthy. I don't know what keeps them going year after year, on and on. To find another McEnroe or Becker is going to take some time. I don't know how long

If you could have lived in another tennis era and played the champions then, what era would it be?

It would be interesting for me to play

in the Borg-McEnroe era. I was coming up when Lendl was about to retire. A lot of people say he was the greatest, or one of the greatest. But I never had a chance to play him. I wish I could have played him. It would be fun.

You once said, "When I finish my career, I want to be like John McEnroe. Wherever you go, you just ask his name—'Do you know John?'—and people will say, 'Yes,' because he has done so much for tennis. And that's what I want to do." What do you have to do to become as famous as McEnroe?

At this stage I don't want to do it anymore. I just want to live a normal, private life where nobody can really bother me Believe me, I have had enough of dealing with the media people, and basically with everybody.

So fame is nice, but privacy is even nicer?

That's exactly right.

Jim Courier says a steroid problem infects the men's tour. Is Courier right?

Honestly, I would not think any of the proteinis players would do that. It would be stupid. I am sure the guys who are winning the most matches on the tour are spending a lot of time training on the tennis court. They are winning because they are way better than anybody else, not because they're using steroids. Drugs and steroids are not suited at all for tennis.

Is there anything else you feel the tennis world should know about you, perhaps to correct any wrong impressions?

I guess I have my own trademark already. And whatever is written now that is different, nobody would believe it. My reputation is established, and no one can change it.

What do you think your reputation is?

Don't ask me. I shouldn't be answering that question. Other people should say what it is.

You're very much like Americans with your honesty.

The one thing I don't want to be is American. I don't like the country. I don't like to live in America Something makes me very negative about the United States.

Is it our high crime rate?

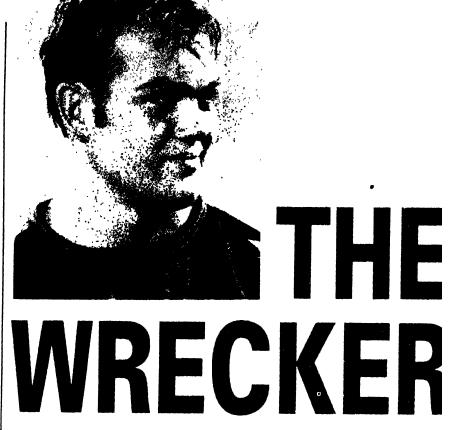
I don't know. But I wouldn't want to live here, and I wouldn't want to be an American. If I were born here, that's one thing. But to move from Russia to the United States, I would never do that. I will live the rest of my days in Russia. I'm patriotic. I want to prove that all the criticism of Russia is not completely true. I will try to make it better for all the Russian people.

BY RICA ROY

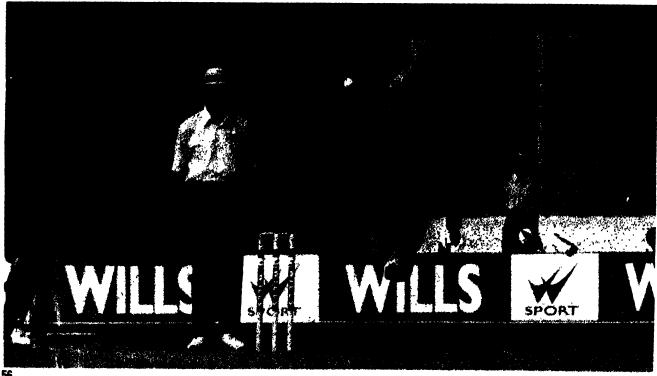
ACQUES KALLIS is not a young man in a hurry, nor is he too ambitious or greedy as many professional sportsmen these days are wont to be. Rather, he comes across as a cool customer.

When South Africa's strike bowlers pulled out of the Wills International Cricket Cup, all attention focussed on this 22-year-old sturdy all-rounder whenever Cronje led his team onto the field. Kallis hit the pitch with intent, and in each match found a line that worried the batsmen; stuck with it and created absolute mayhem in the opposition ranks. In fact, Kallis played a vital role that culminated in Hansie Cronje and his team winning the tournament that was billed as the mini World Cup. It also got Kallis the well deserved epithet of 'Man of the series'.

If one thought that was enough, then his accumulation of runs in the tournament only adds to his stature as a genuine allrounder. "I'll always be a batsman before a bowler," he said, which was surely surprising considering the amount of swing he managed to get at the National



JACQUES KALLIS of South Africa has built an awesome reputation for himself. He excels both with the ball and the bat, and ends up wreaking havoc amongst the opposition



Stadium in Dhaka. Kallis went on to elaborate, "I've worked hard on my bowling. I stand up much straighter in the delivery stride. I still like to hit the deck, but I've probably lost a yard of pace for greater accuracy. But I will always be a batsman first."

Translated, this means that Kallis has the potential to be one of world's most potent international all-rounders. He could be the perfect batsman-bowler foil to Shaun Pollock's bowler-batsman. It gives South Africa a balance of power in their team which will not exactly erode their chances of becoming the strongest side in the world in next five years.

Within two years of making his international appearance Kallis has already played 16 Tests and is one of the few who have formed the spine of their team, in such a short span. When he was first introduced against England, three winters ago, he did not quite live up to the billing, "but I wasn't really scared of failures. rather, I was patiently waiting to recognise my powers. I knew that there wouldn't be any dearth of opportunities if I perform...," quipped Kallis. Despite his failures South Africans knew that they had discovered a gem. Contrary to public perception here that foreigners simply throw young players into the deep end and let them swim, Kallis was given five Tests and then quietly hauled up from the pool.

"There are pros and cons to be picked young," he explained. "It can be easy to fail at this level because there is so much pressure and some players could almost be finished by it. I found it tough at first, but it didn't upset me. You've got to get it right."

Kallis is the sort who ponders on what might be, rather than what has been, and the signs he demonstrated so positively at Dhaka were unmistakable. He is wary of paper talk and the intrusions of the media, for it accompanied every move of his when he first broke into the fray two months

Along with Donald and Pollock, Kallis forms a formidable bowling force for South Africa



If need be Kallis can perform with the bat too. An ideal utility player to figure in any captain's playing XI

after his 20th birthday. He scored his maiden Test hundred in Melbourne back in December last. It was his seventh Test (he and the selectors had been patient) and the innings was instrumental in saving the match.

It was not only his highest Test score but his most complete performance. The English county system had something to do with this, and it was surely not pure coincidence that he had spent the summer honing his game by playing for Middlesex. Surely, this was yet another foreigner polished to perfection on English soil.

"I can tell you that county cricket is not as soft as you guys make it out to be. There were some good players and some good matches. I enjoyed it and would love to go back to the county circuit, once again," he said. The man is, like almost every other Protea in the squad, is amenable, pleasant and is

not afraid to express his opinion. "We've got a tremendous spirit. We take on the field knowing that the opposition will try to push us all the way ... we enjoy our cricket, certainly but beyond that, we have been taught how to release the pressure."

Though a Frenchman by birth, there is nothing remotely French about him. A charming, forthright personality, Kallis has firm convictions and more often than not, abides by them. Being a bowler, Kallis does not consider the 'dissent of the bowler's rule' as a fair one to the bowlers.

Kallis explained,"Quite honestly, this business of firing players can be pathetic. Are players not allowed to show emotion? ...umpires have a very hard job at hand and we accept that mistakes can be made. I think also you have got to keep the human element without calling in cameras, and the third and fourth umpires. Players know that, but equally they've got to be allowed to show disappointment and I think umpires will realise that." Indeed, it seems that he has all the trappings of a future leader.

Kallis has turned out to be a dependable weapon for captain Hansie Cronje. To a young team (when the likes of Donald and Pollock were nursing their injuries) Kallis showed the team the way to scale the peak. The South African skipper was all praise for Kallis, "We all expected Jacques (Kallis) to come good this season. He has shaped into an utility player, lived up to our expectations. His performance has been rewarding for South Africa. But, we have a long season ahead when we take on the mighty West Indies. Hopefully, Jacques will strike them as well."

Kallis undoubtedly falls in the league of gentle giants, but he can be quite lethal too. And if he displays the same prowess that was on view in Dhaka, the opposition will have to find ways to evade his clutches. Only, that it would be a wee bit difficult, to say the least. And to the spectators watching this spectacle, there would be nothing more arresting than Kallis', art to maul the opposition.

S P O T L I G H T

THE ICE MAN'

That's Mika Hakkinen's nickname in the Formula One circuit. He warded off the challenge of Michael Schumacher to become the World Champion for the first time in '98



REKO MCOP

EATH—it is singularly the most frightening prospect that any living organism faces. In the case of human beings it is even more so; from the moment one has the capacity to think about life and death, death is abhorred of and never thought about. Some humans do come face-to-face with death when in the prime of life. Some die, some walk away with their spirits crushed, but some, a very small minority, saunter away, saying "I'll live on, thank you very much."

Mika Hakkinen is one person who belongs to the last category. Only a human blessed with nerves more stronger than steel could survive Hakkinen's ordeal and live to tell his story of victory. In the November of '95, in a high speed practice session crash in Adelaide, before the Australian GP, Hakkinen fractured his skull and the resultant injury stopped him from breathing.

Doctors performed a tracheotomy on Hakkinen at the track itself, because his condition was too delicate and precarious to warrant transfer to a hospital. All the while, the operation was being performed, rumours swept the pit lane that Hakkinen had lost his life in the accident. Hakkinen survived, and lived to tell his tale.

Normal persons would have treaded life more cautiously after coming so terrifyingly close to death. Not many would have ventured to driving on city roads, forget racing Formula One cars, after such an incident. But not Mika 'The Ice Man' Hakkinen. The Finn fought back to fitness, and returned to racing in February '96.

Exactly 1,000 days after the hortific accident, while racing in the Japanese GP in the last race of the '98 season at Suzuka, Hakkinen got a message from Ron Dennis, his chief at McLaren. It was a very brief message, but one that Hakkinen had waited for, all his life.

The message from Dennis that crackled on the pits-to-cockpit radio was, "Michael Schumacher is out of

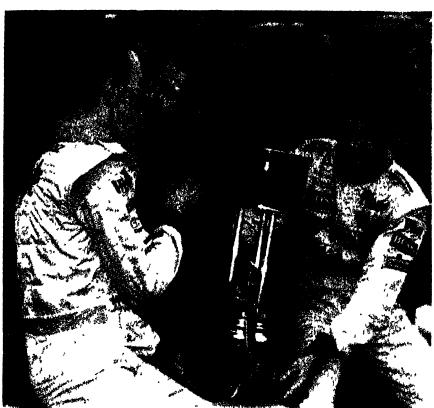
the race and you are the world champion." It was the first Drivers' Championship for Mika Hakkinen, who before this year had just one first finish to his name, and it was the first Drivers' Championship for McLaren since 1991 when the legendary Ayrton Senna led the team to victory.

It was a great moment, not just for Hakkinen, his wife Erja and the entire McLaren team. It was a great moment for the country of Finland whose 5.15

better driver than I ever was, and he is going to be even better now that he knows that he is the world champion."

Hakkinen, however, was more modest after his victory.

"This is a very special day for me. It has taken me a while to win the Championship and now that it has happened, I feel very happy. The team achieved a lot this season and this is the perfect result for all of us, not just



Hakkinen being congratulated by wife Erja, while David Coulthard admires the trophy. Erja has had a major influence on Hakkinen, and after the '95 crash she gave up everything to be fulltime beside Hakkinen

million population had waited for their moment under the sun.

A quarter of Finland's population watched Hakkinen win the Drivers' title. The average number of viewers for the Japanese GP was 942,000, and the number jumped to 1.3 million in the last half hour of the race. It is an incredible viewership figure if you keep in mind that the race started at 5.30 a.m. Finnish time. Finland, before, had produced only one world champion, Keke Rosberg, who is presently Hakkinen's manager.

Rosberg, after the incredible victory, said of Hakkinen, "Mika is a

for me," was all that Hakkinen said later.

At the start of the race at Suzuka, there was talk about Schumacher trying to take Hakkinen out of the race. Hakkinen needed only a second spot to win the Championship. In fact, Schumacher had taken Hakkinen out of a race in an accident in Macau eight years ago. At Suzuka, it was Schumacher who had to retire in his 32nd lap, after his rear tyre exploded, because of excessive heating according to experts. Foresight also did play its part in Hakkinen's Championship win. During his pit

MIKA HAKKINEN: PERSONAL FACTS

- *Mika is a citizen of Finland.
- *Mika weighs 70 kilograms.
- *Mika's parents are Aila and Harri, and has an elder sister, Niina.
- *Mika has a dog whose name is Toto.
- *Mika's hobbies are tennis, scuba-diving, mountain biking and rollerskating.
- *Mika's favourite musicians are J. Karjalainen (Finnish artist), Frank Sinatra and Elvis.
- *At the moment Mika drives an A-Class Mercedes-Benz.
- *Born in Vantaa, near Helsinki
- *Started school in Vantaa, (Laajavuoren ala-aste)
- *Got an examination as a sheetmetal welder
- *Married to Erja Honkonen in 1998



Well done, mate.' Schumacher broke F1 protocol by being the first one to congratulate Hakkinen after the new champion pulled in after the race. This gesture showed a human side not usually associated with Schumacher

Personal Quotes

- *Mother,"Even as a child Mika has always been a positive and happy person."
- *Father, "Mika has always been objective. When he has decided that he will do something, he usually does."
- *Elder sister, Niina, "Mika's always been positive. He finds good sides even to bad things. Mika gets on by his own, and doesn't try to be the centre of attention. Right now that might be a bit impossible!"
- *Best man, Mika Sohlberg, "Mika's a very loyal person, who has a huge will to win. As a good friend I can say that he is an all-round great guy and in addition, he's fun."

stops, McLaren's mechanics swarmed together to keep his car cool with packs of dry ice.

Fate indeed was very cruel to the former world champion Michael Schumacher who had started racing against Hakkinen a long time ago—in fact, from their kart racing days in 1983. So while Hakkinen sprayed 'Moet et Chandon' champagne on his celebrating mechanics, Michael 'The King' Schumacher sat alone in the kitchen behind the Ferrari garage munching on a packet of crisps wondering what went wrong. Defeat, indeed, is a great leveller.

Michael Schumacher considered by most to be the most arrogant, cold, calculating and competitive driver in today's F1 racing however, showed a very warm and spontaneous human side of him after the Championships. He broke F1 profocol by being the first to congratulate Hakkinen after he had brought in his car. Later, he even shared a celebratory drink and a karaoke session with Hakkinen.

However, it was business as usual, soon after. Schumacher immediately got back to work testing his Ferrari on the new Bridgestone tyres that he would be using next year.

Bridgestone, incidentally, will be the only tyre that will be allowed in

Erja has always been her husband's staunchest supporter. Need we say more?





vo time world champion Michael Schumacher presents a picture of utter disgust and loss after he had to retire from the Japanese GP.

ormula One from the next season, ith Goodyear having finished their usiness relations with Formula One the end of the 1998 season. For Hakkinen however, the lebrations continued a little longer. fter the victory Hakkinen left for oking, a small town in Surrey, ngland which has few claims to me, one being the venue of the cLaren factory. The new world nampion went there to thank the orkers who built the car that helped m win eight races this year, and :lped McLaren win a Constructors' id Drivers' Championship after ven years. Later, Hakkinen ndertook a three week promotional

tour on behalf of the team and his sponsors.

Even Hakkinen has no plans of a long winter lay-off. He knows only too well that his competition, specially Schumacher and Coulthard, are going to go all out next season trying to take away his title. Hakkinen has already warned Schumacher that any hopes he harbours of getting the Drivers' next year are doomed to failure.

"I know I will be the man to beat next year. I want back-to-back titles. I am determined to win the Championship again in 1999, and what happened this year will only make me more confident. It is going to be very tough defending the title, but I intend working really hard to make sure I am ready for the next year and I know that the team will be doing the same. " warned Hakkinen.

It will be an even more confident and determined Mika Hakkinen who will take on the opposition next year. We all know about his courage, strength, confidence and determination. After all, not many champions in world sport, or not many human beings for that matter, have mocked death and walked away with life.

For that to happen, one has to be someone very special.

One has to be Mika 'The Ice Man' Hakkinen.



Interesting happenings in the international sports arena



Top left & below: Sequence of a fall. British show jumper John Whitaker takes a hurdle moments before he suffered a heavy fall from his horse during the Vienna Show Jumping event. Whitaker was rushed to the hospital



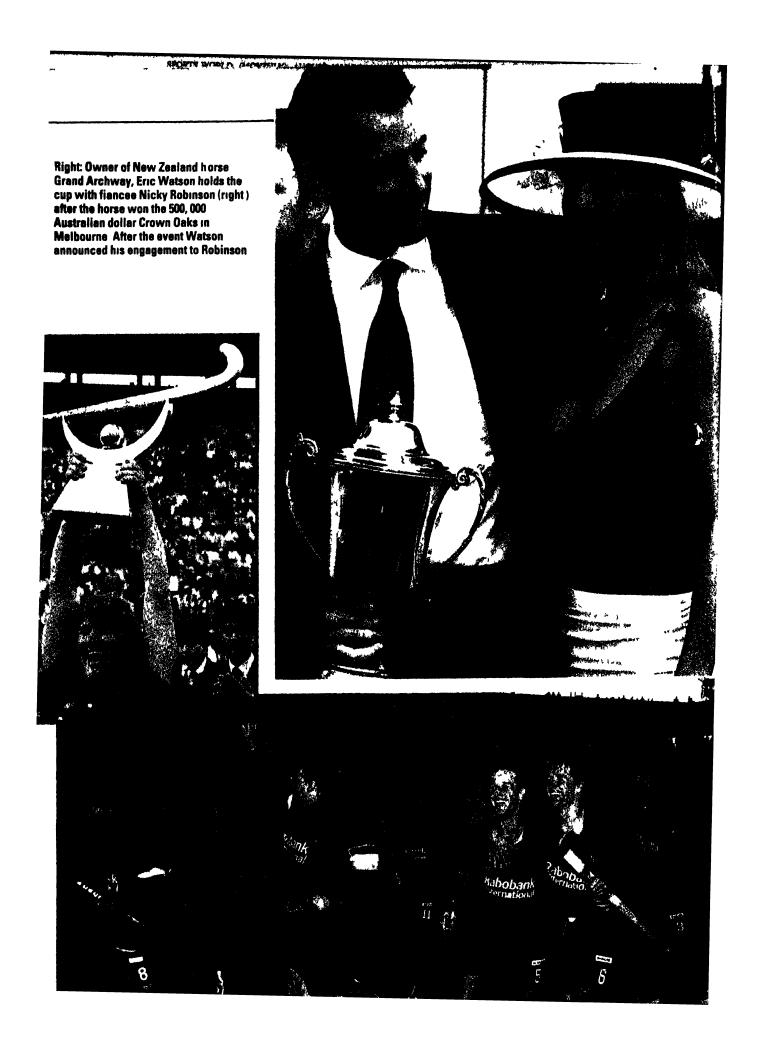




Left: A rgrentine
soccer star Diego Maradona
(left) accompanied by his
representative Guilermo
Coppola, greets
photographers as he attended
a Mercosur Cup football
match between Palmeiras of
Brazil and Maradona's former
team Boca Juniors in Buenos
Aires

Below: The inaugural Khardung-la Hill Climb races were recently flagged off at Leh. This competition was held on the most hostile terrain in sub-zero conditions on the highest motorable road in the world. Due to heavy fog and snowfall seme of the participants were compelled to opt out





Below left. Dutch hockey players celebrate their victory waving to the Lahore crowd after defeating Pakistan in the final of the 20th Champions
Trophy. The Olympic and World-champions Holland completed a unique 'Grand Slam'. (Inset): Dutch captain Ronald Janssen holds aloft the Champions Trophy



Above: Richard Groenendaal of the Netherlands steers his bike down a hill to win the World Cup cross country cycling race in Eschenbach

Left: Double squash world champion Sarah Fitz-Gerald (right) from Australia presents her trophy after winning the final match of the women's World Championships at Stuttgart. She beat teammate Michelle Martin

PHOTOGRAPHS AFP

freewheeling

THE first time we at Sportsworld heard of Sachin Tendulkar was when he and Vinod Kambli rewrote the record books in a school match in Mumbai.

A former colleague, whose fondness for cricket writing usually rivalled his liking for dentist appointments, put up his hand to travel to Bombay to investigate whether we had a genius on our hands or whether it was just another flash in the pan.

He ended up at Sachin's family apartment in suburban Mumbai, but apart from a few nods and mono-syllablic answers from the young star, got not much else than constant references to Sachin's elder brother A jit who was the 'spokesperson'.

After that cover story, it will not come as a shock to Sportsworld readers, that Sachin Tendulkar's face has donned more covers of this magazine than any other sportsperson.

Now once again he is Man Of The Year.

I recall him being Man of The Year the first time we came up with the idea of having one some years ago.

Personally, I did not know Sachin all that well during my years as a journalist back home. I did notice, however, in his younger days he had a sweet tooth. His favourite spot at a party was always the table where dessert was being served.

But the joy he brought us hard-nosed cricket journalists, and the pride. Well, who could forget that!

Wherever he went, and we tagged along, he did us proud. When India made the historic visit to South Africa in 1990, Nelson Mandela was most interested in meeting the young man who was being hailed as the closest thing to Bradman. On Sachin's first trip to Australia in 1992, the Don going against convention, travelled to the Adelaide Oval to have a look at the young legend.

Sachin and his music system are inseparable. He claims the music helps him to relax and also helps him to stay focussed Mrs. Bradman commented on how much Sachin reminded her of the young Bradman, especially in his attitude while batting.

Today, just as night follows day, so too is the fact that Sachin Tendulkar i the greatest batsman in the world.

No big deal, you may say. But chec

In this, my adopted country, it is common knowledge among all Australians that we have:

- * the best country: Australia
- * the best beer: take your pick
- * the best golfer: Greg Norman
- * the best sporting nation Well in short, the best of EVERYTHING.

Yet, even in the midst of all this self-centred jingoism, Australia knows it does not have one thing: the best batsman in the world.

And there are no arguments on that

The Aussie lad, Steve Waugh, we believe comes pretty close to being the best. But even he openly jokes about the prospects of being at the wrong end of a Tendulkar blitz.

The young lady secretary in my office, whose knowledge of Indian cricket begins with the name of Sunil Gavaskar and ends with Sachin Tendulkar, jokes about the possibility of steroid use, everytime I show off the sports pages after the superman has won yet another match almost singlehandedly.

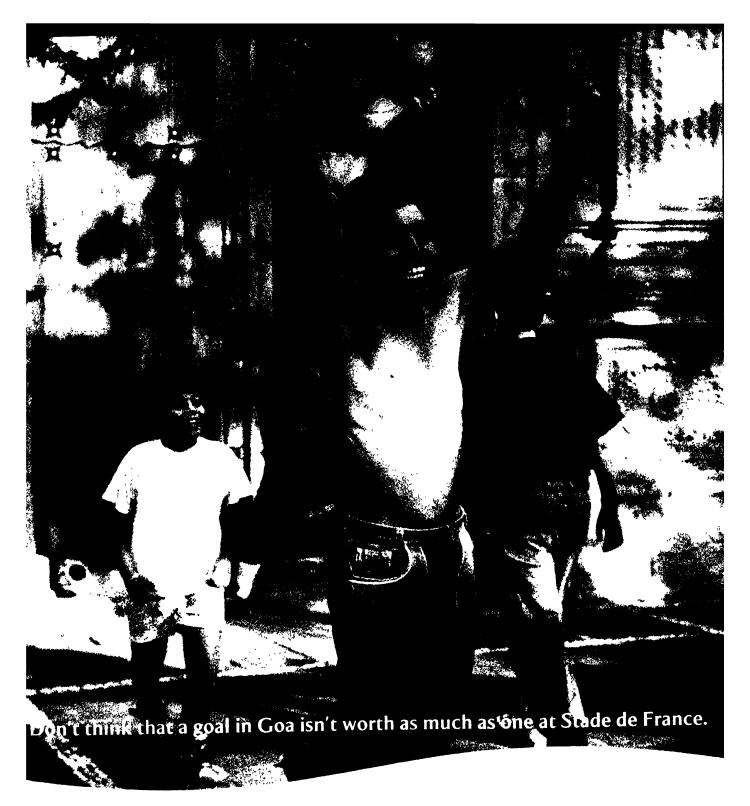
Whenever I bump into my neighbour, a 70-year-old very propahAussie lady, she almost always opens her polite conversations with, "Ohhhh that Sachin. He did it again."

When in Australia for Sir Donald Bradman's birthday bash, Sachin was in greater demand than any other guest, and that included Australia's favourite son, Shane Warne.

The goodwill this little man with a huge talent gains for his country cannot be matched by anything else which has a 'Made in India' tag.

No wonder, when I provided a brief synopsis of the present Indian political scenario to a mate of mine the other day, he interrupted saying: "Why not Sachin Tendulkar for Prime Minister."





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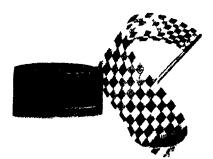
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